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CATHOLIC LONDON A CENTURY AGO

BISHOP DOUGLASS.

From a Bust by Turnerelli at St. Edmund's College.

[*Frontispiece.*

CATHOLIC LONDON A CENTURY AGO

BY

BERNARD WARD

CANON OF WESTMINSTER

LONDON

CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY

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PREFACE

THE following pages are a considerably expanded form of a lecture delivered before the Historical Research Society at Archbishop's House, Westminster, on Monday, March 6, 1905. The original intention was simply to print the lecture as delivered; but in the course of revision for press, so much new matter presented itself that it was finally decided to change the form somewhat, and in this way it eventually assumed its present shape.

The principal source of information used throughout has been the unpublished Diary of Bishop Douglass, covering the years 1792–1811. The original is unfortunately lost, but we have a transcript of the greater part among our Archives at St. Edmund's College. The other sources

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made use of are easily accessible; they include the well-known works of Charles Butler, Gillow, Amherst, Husenbeth, Milner, Plasse and Mazière Brady, and the early Catholic Directories and Periodicals, including the *Catholic Miscellany* for 1823, which contains a series of articles on London. The statements throughout are so numerous that it has not been found possible to give references for all of them; but in order to guard against errors, the Rev. Raymond Stanfield, whose acquaintance with old Catholic history is well known, has been kind enough to read it through; and Mr. James Britten, K.S.G., has likewise gone through the proofs. Various changes suggested by them have been adopted.

The opportunity has been taken to collect a good many interesting plates on Catholic London of a century ago. For valuable assistance in obtaining these, and for other help, the thanks of the author are due to the Bishop of Clifton, who most kindly allowed free access to the Archives of the former Western District; to Canons Fleming, Vere, and Gildea, and Revv. James Sprankling and Charles Brown; and also to Mr. George Barton, who took great trouble in identifying with

certainty the house in which Bishop Douglass lived. The portrait of Dr. Milner is reproduced from the *Annals* of the Benedictine community, now at Oulton in Staffordshire, by kind permission of the Lady Abbess. The photographs of pictures and buildings have been taken by Mr. J. Hubert, of Chiswick.

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Reprinted from the *Edmundian* for July, 1901. This print, which has often been reproduced, was originally issued as a memorial card immediately after Bishop Challoner's death: *see* Gillow, i., p. 457, No. 53.

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CATHOLIC LONDON A CENTURY AGO

I

INTRODUCTION—BISHOP CHALLONER'S PROPHECY

IN the Diary of Dr. Douglass, who was Bishop of the London District from 1790 till 1812, we find the following entry under February, 1798 :—

"In conversation this evening on the disregard shown by the lay nobility and gentry for the Bishops and Clergy, Secular and Regular, the whole company agreed that this want of respect or regard showed itself in the lifetime of Bishop Challoner, and Mr. Lindow[1] told the following history."

[1] Rev. John Lindow, Dean of the "Old Chapter."

The history describes an attempt to procure a Catholic Relief Act in 1778, which was left in the hands of certain lay Catholics. When the Bill was drafted, it was found to contain no clauses in favour of the clergy, but was entirely from the point of view of the laity. On being asked on this point by the responsible Minister, they answered, "We only want to secure our persons and property." A meeting was accordingly held of Bishop Challoner, Bishop Talbot, and Bishop Hay, who addressed a joint letter of protest to the Catholic laymen concerned; but they took no notice of it, and one of them even refused to see Bishop Hay. The Diary then proceeds :—

"Bishop Hay, dining with Bishop Challoner, told him of the affront he had received from the Noblemen as above related. Bishop Challoner paused, and then spoke of their disregard for their clergy, and that many of them would fall off from their religion. Bishop Hay lamented this, because, as they supported priests and chapels, religion would suffer by their apostasy. On which the Bishop (Challoner) again paused, then said, 'There will be a new people.' This was considered by Bishop Hay as a prediction of what would take place in a few years."

The name of Challoner is still a household word amongst English Catholics. His sanctity

is acknowledged, and the fact that he was in some measure gifted with prophecy need cause us no surprise. On another occasion, near the end of his life, he is known to have prophesied. At the time of the Gordon Riots he escaped from his house in London and took refuge at the country residence of one Mr. Mawhood, at Finchley. This was, however, considered too near town for safety, and it was arranged that he should travel further north. The carriage was waiting at the door, but the Bishop remained in the domestic chapel, absorbed in prayer. When at length he came forth, he refused to go as had been arranged, declaring that the danger was over, and further, that Mr. Mawhood's town house, which stood in the midst of the part where the rioters were most violent, would not be injured. Both of these predictions were verified in the event.

Returning to his prophecy recorded by Dr. Douglass, in which he foresaw that a new people would arise, it may be difficult for us to realize the completeness of its verification to-day. It requires some familiarity with the state of Catholics in the eighteenth century to see how completely it changed during the nineteenth.

In Dr. Challoner's time we find indeed "chapels" (so-called) at the various embassies

of Catholic countries, where mass was permitted, on the plea of the ground being "extra-territorial" by international law. And it would appear that English Catholics were usually allowed to attend the services without molestation;[1] but as the "chapels" were theoretically for the use of foreigners, it was forbidden to have sermons in English, and this law was often enforced for long periods of time, by means of representations to the ambassador on the part of the English Government. Beyond these few chapels, nothing was to be found either in London or in the provincial towns but a few "mass-houses" scattered here and there, which had an intermittent and always precarious existence. The only secure centres were the country seats of the

[1] The embassies where people were admitted for mass were variable. It often happened that an ambassador would change his residence, to the great inconvenience of those accustomed to frequent his house for mass. The following list of Embassy Chapels available for the public is taken from *Maitland's Survey of London in* 1736, *i.e.*, just before Challoner became Bishop:—

The French, Greek Street, Soho; the Spanish, Ormond Street; the Portuguese, Golden Square; the Sardinian, Lincoln's Inn Fields; the Venetian, Suffolk Street.

It will be seen by comparing the list given in Chapter VII. that the Sardinian is the only Embassy Chapel that was in the same place sixty years later. The list apparently does not profess to be a complete one.

BISHOP CHALLONER

at the Sardinian Chapel, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

[*To face page* 4.

Catholic aristocracy. Some of these could boast of a continuous existence since pre-Reformation days; at others there were priests' hiding holes, secret chapels, and the like, which bridged over the worst times, till the days arrived when it was safe to have mass in the light of day. Dr. Challoner died in January, 1781, having just lived to see the repeal of the worst of the Penal Laws; for although Catholic churches were not yet legal, the reward for informers was abolished, and in consequence no further prosecutions took place; and the mass-houses began to be replaced by permanent chapels.

This was the beginning of the change which led to the complete fulfilment of Challoner's words which we can see to-day. The Church is now no longer supported, as it once was, entirely by the old Catholic families. The centres of Catholic influence have left the country seats. We no longer look for them, as of old, at Lulworth or Glossop or Stonor; nor even in the same sense at Arundel. There are, indeed, still amongst us members of the old aristocracy, some of them fervent Catholics, worthy of the best traditions of their families. In many of our chief works they are still to the fore, and are leaders of the laity and large subscribers. But the time is past when practically the whole support of the Church in

this country depended on them. A new people are with us—the poor who have grown so numerous, those of Irish descent, the middle classes, moneyed men in towns, so that the city missions have become self-supporting; and the centres of Catholic activity outside London now coincide with the centres of population—Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Birmingham, Leeds, &c.

The present state of the Church has not been brought about without a long and difficult struggle, and the life of a missionary priest to-day is far harder and more continuous and more complicated than formerly. There are clubs to support, boys' brigades to arrange, rescue work to attend to, and, above all, in nearly every mission a parochial school, which itself absorbs more of the priest's time and anxiety and care than his whole mission did in former days. But throughout all his burdens he is supported by the new people that have arisen around him, who now form the backbone of the Church.

It is this which makes the period of a century ago in London one of exceptional interest; for the change had then begun and was rapidly progressing. By the second Catholic Relief Act, passed in 1791, Catholic churches became for-

mally tolerated. Some had already been built; others rapidly followed; and the succeeding fifteen years wrought more change in Catholic London than had occurred in generations before that time.

II

ENGLISH CATHOLICS AT THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE transition period was one of great difficulty and delicacy, and the conflict which ensued between the Catholic laity and the Vicars Apostolic for a time threatened absolute disaster. To our ears it sounds strange to hear of this conflict with the Bishops on the part of good Catholics ; for good Catholics they were. Their daily life would put us nowadays to shame. Their punctuality in saying long morning and evening prayers was rigidly observed. Many of them heard mass daily, even at grave personal inconvenience. They were exceedingly strict on the question of fasting and abstinence. Even their conversation at recreation time was governed by rules to guard against possible want of charity to their neighbour, which has often laid it open to the charge of dulness. And their charity to the poor was

continual and almost boundless. They did not indeed, approach the sacraments so often as we do, for such was not the custom of the time; but they seem to have made up for this by the fervour which they brought to their reception. The preparation for their Easter communion was an affair of days, if not of weeks, as also their thanksgiving after it. The more devout of them would go eight times a year, at the "Eight Indulgences"—which are still read out in church, though their observance has now fallen into disuse, or been superseded by the modern "First Sunday of the Month." Once more, it seems strange to hear of men leading lives such as this opposing their Bishops.

In judging of their conduct, however, we must bear in mind their history. The Catholic body in England at that time was but a remnant—a steadily dwindling remnant—and the fact that it existed at all was due, not to the Bishops, but to the old English Catholic families themselves, who had kept open their chapels and supported their pastors in the times of persecution and later. In the early days of Protestantism, owing chiefly to the unfortunate disputes between Regulars and Seculars, there were no Bishops in England. When a Vicar Apostolic (as he was called) was appointed, he had at first great diffi-

culty in exercising his office, and for a long time Dr. Smith, the second Vicar Apostolic, had to reside abroad. It was not until the reign of James II. that regular episcopal government was possible; and the four "districts" into which England was then divided—Northern, Midland, Western, and London—remained the ecclesiastical division till within a few years of the re-establishment of the Hierarchy under Cardinal Wiseman. But the reign of James II. was short, and immediately afterwards the persecution was resumed by a newly devised set of penal laws, which if less violent than the former ones, were no less effective. The episcopal government was continued, but the Bishops had to go from place to place, wherever they could find a temporary shelter from "informers"—for any informer could claim the reward of £100 should he prove successful. The Catholic gentry used, of course, to harbour the Bishops and to assist them in many ways, so that their relations with them soon became almost the same as with their own chaplains, the chief difference being that when a new priest came, or sometimes when other changes were made, they might have to ask the Bishop to grant "faculties."

It was not till towards the middle of the eighteenth century that a Bishop could have

a permanent house to live in. Dr. Challoner lived in Gloucester Street, near Holborn, and was usually unmolested; but by no means always. For a long time he was troubled by the well-known informer Payne, and was at last actually indicted; but fortunately Payne overreached himself, and some subpœnas forged by him having reached Dr. Challoner's hands, the Bishop was able to silence him by threat of exposure. Nevertheless, it was not till the passing of the first Catholic Relief Act in 1778, which abolished the reward for informers, that he could feel safe. Less than three years after this he died, his death having been accelerated by the anxieties of the Gordon Riots, when, though nearly ninety years old, he had to leave his house in the middle of the night and hurry off to the country to escape from the designs of the mob against his person. After his death his coadjutor, Bishop Talbot, became Vicar Apostolic. He took a house in Castle Street, Holborn, where his two successors also lived;[1] but he resided a

[1] The house in Castle Street continued to be the residence of the Vicars Apostolic till 1830, when Dr. Bramston moved to 35, Golden Square, which was still in use when the hierarchy was re-established. Cardinal Wiseman lived there from the time he came to London until the year 1855, after which he resided, when in town, at 8, York Place, Baker Street. The old Archbishop's

great part of his time at Hammersmith ; and he had likewise a country house at Old Hall Green, in Hertfordshire, where a school or "Academy" for boys was carried on under his direction—on which St. Edmund's College was afterwards engrafted. Gradually he and his successors began to exercise the normal functions of a bishop.

If all this is considered, it is not really wonderful that when the Bishops began to exercise their jurisdiction independently of their patrons, and to move priests from place to place, to give—and sometimes to withhold—faculties without consulting them, the new state of things came practically as a surprise to those who had virtually ruled the Church for so long, and they got the practical impression that the action of the Vicars Apostolic was tyranny. They became suspicious of the slightest interference on the part of the Bishops, and even threatened to cease to support the chapels and chaplains at their country seats, on the plea that if the Vicar Apostolic claimed the right of control, he should likewise be called upon to find the money.

There were, indeed, other reasons which led to a state of strain between the Bishops and the

House was bought by Dr. Manning in 1872 ; and finally, in 1902, Cardinal Vaughan moved into the present Archbishop's House, next to the Cathedral.

laity. In treating for the abrogation of the Penal Laws—"Catholic Relief," as it was called—the laymen, especially those who by rights should have been members of the House of Lords, could get a hearing which the Bishops at that time could not, and the fact that they were looked upon by those in high station as the natural leaders of the Catholic body, as they had in fact been for so long, must have intensified this feeling.

The matter became practical during the negotiations which preceded the Catholic Relief Act of 1791. At a meeting of Catholics held four years earlier, a Committee of Ten[1] was elected to watch

[1] These were originally all laymen, but a year later three of the clergy were added to the Committee. One of these was Bishop James Talbot, of the London District, who became a member by his express wish; and he seems to have hoped that his presence would have exercised more restraining influence than in fact it did. He died in January, 1790, and is said to have declared on his deathbed that in the event of his recovery, he would take stronger measures against them. The two other priests added to the Committee, Bishop Charles Berington (Coadjutor of the Midland District), and Rev. Joseph Wilkes, O.S.B., were both in full sympathy with the views and aims of the lay members. Their signatures occur throughout the "Blue Books," which were official manifestoes of the Committee, and both incurred censure in consequence—Rev. Joseph Wilkes was suspended by his Bishop, Dr. Walmesley, of the Western District, and Bishop Berington, when he

over Catholic interests, and with this Committee the responsible ministers, including such well-known names as Pitt, Fox, Wyndham, and others, treated, as though they were the only representatives of the Catholic body. And once the Committee-men had cut themselves off in their public action from their ecclesiastical rulers, their lack of theological training soon led them into unsound regions further than they realized or knew. They asserted that the strict attitude assumed by the Vicars Apostolic was un-English, and traced the evils they complained of to the too close intercourse with the Roman Curia, who (they contended) did not understand the circumstances of Protestant England. For this reason

succeeded as Vicar Apostolic, was refused his faculties by Rome. In the end he withdrew his signature from the "Blue Books," and his faculties were sent to him; but he died suddenly before they arrived. Bishop Thomas Talbot, the brother of Bishop James, continued, till his death in 1795, averse to strong measures, considering that "we should lose in charity more than we should gain in orthodoxy." He did, however, sign the condemnation of the oath in 1789, so that in this all four Vicars Apostolic were united; and as all of them at that time belonged to the old English families, this was all the more emphatic. They were Bishops James and Thomas Talbot, Bishop Walmesley, and Bishop Matthew Gibson. Shortly afterwards two of them—Bishops James Talbot and Matthew Gibson—died, and were succeeded by Bishops Douglass and William Gibson respectively.

they agitated for a proper Hierarchy, "so that this frequent recurrence to Rome might cease"; while some of them even went so far as to claim their right to elect their own bishops.

An anti-papal attitude was the natural accompaniment of views such as these. It was contended that the name "Papist," then commonly used by Protestants as an opprobrious title, was legitimately applicable to a section of Catholics, from whom the Committee party were never tired of expressing their disagreement. In their morbid anxiety to disclaim all connection with them, they drew up a Protestation repudiating many of the opinions popularly attributed to Catholics, and endeavouring to minimise all doctrines distasteful to the average Englishman. This was signed by over fifteen hundred Catholics, including the Vicars Apostolic, though they made difficulties about it, and one at least afterwards withdrew his signature. The Protestation was followed by a form of oath, which it was proposed that all Catholics who wished to profit by the proposed Relief Act should be required to take, to ensure their freedom from such views and their loyalty to the Crown. It is in this oath, which was incorporated in the Bill as originally drafted, that the extraordinary appellation "Protesting Catholic Dissenters" was used.

The Committee had now gone definitely beyond their province, and acted as though they were the leaders of the Catholic body in spiritual matters. At the title, "Protesting Catholic Dissenters," we can now perhaps afford to smile, but the oath contained definitely unsound doctrine, and the Vicars Apostolic had no alternative but to condemn it. This they did unanimously in 1789. An open rupture ensued. Notwithstanding the condemnation, the Committee pressed forward the Bill, oath and all. When, however, it came on for discussion in Parliament, Dr. Milner, then priest at Winchester, appeared on the scene, and by his extraordinary activity and energy succeeded in convincing the responsible Ministers that the Vicars Apostolic were the only leaders recognized by all who could justly claim to be called Catholics, and that no Bill would be accepted which contained any oath of which they could not approve. Some negotiations followed with Bishop Douglass, who had by that time been appointed to the London District; and the Bill was taken through Parliament shorn of its obnoxious clauses, and with another form of oath substituted for the original one.

The immediate danger to the Catholic body was thus averted, but the Committee were far

from reconciled to their defeat. Their term of office having expired, they formed themselves, with their sympathisers, into a society with the—to our ears—ominous title of the "Cisalpine Club," and they continued to exercise a predominating influence over the Catholic laity for a good many years. For a time there appeared danger of an actual schism, but by the aid of three self-appointed "Gentlemen Mediators" (as they called themselves), added to mutual forbearance, that evil was averted, though the state of tension lasted for a long time afterwards.

Looking back after the lapse of years, no Catholic will be found to defend the attitude of the extreme section of those concerned. But it is not fair to judge a whole party by its extreme section, even though there may have been some remissness among the many in not more openly dissociating themselves from them.[1] The active leaders were not numerous. Moreover, there was—it cannot be denied—considerable sympathy with the general aims of the Committee among some of the London clergy. The formal condemnation of the Committee by the Vicars

[1] It is only fair to add that most, if not all, of those who had taken any part in opposing the Vicars Apostolic made due amends within the next few years—some on their death-beds, but most of them during life.

Apostolic was in 1791 only read in one church in London,[1] and, earlier on, the Vicars Apostolic themselves seem to have taken a more lenient view of the Committee's attitude than was justified afterwards by the event. Those who bear this in mind, and remember also all that we owe to the Catholic aristocracy in penal times, will not be ready to judge too harshly a body which included in its number many truly devout and even holy men.

[1] The "Blue Books" state that it was read at Moorfields, and was reported to have been read in the Chapel of the Borough, but this was afterwards found not to have been the case. They also state that it was sent to the embassy chapels with a request that it might be read. It is quite probable that the ambassadors might be anxious not to be in any way mixed up with the business, and ordinarily the Bishops' pastorals were not read in their chapels, where, indeed, sermons were still theoretically prohibited. Thus the churches where the clergy refused to read it were the Borough and Virginia Street.

III

DR. POYNTER AND DR. MILNER

IT is just the consideration indicated earlier which marks the difference between the attitude of Dr. Poynter and Dr. Milner, whose disagreements reached their acute stage between 1805 and 1815.

Dr. Poynter was a man of considerable learning and remarkable holiness of life. He was born at Petersfield, in Hampshire, where his father had some landed property, and spent over twenty years at the English College at Douay as student, Professor, and finally Prefect of Studies. After being imprisoned and in imminent danger of his life during the Reign of Terror, he returned to England and devoted himself to the foundation and development of St. Edmund's College, first as Vice-President, then as President. In 1803 he was consecrated Bishop Coadjutor to Dr. Douglass, and during the last years of that prelate's life the greater part of the responsibility

for Catholic affairs fell on the shoulders of his coadjutor.

It was at Douay that Dr. Poynter seems to have learnt his respect for the old Catholic families, who were numerously represented there, and his keen sense of what English Catholics owed to them. When during the Revolution the College was attacked by the mob and the armorial bearings of the Catholic aristocracy which were carved on the walls were singled out for destruction as being contrary to Republican principles, Dr. Poynter's indignation knew no bounds; and when later on as a Bishop his duty forced him to make a stand against the representatives of these very families in order to be faithful to the cause of religion and to his episcopal vows, he found himself in a difficult and delicate position. His opposition was that of one who was bound, for the sake of principle, to stand up against those whom he esteemed and respected; it was conducted throughout with great consideration for their feelings, and continual anxiety to put the most charitable construction on their actions. We may quote his words written in 1815, when he had been Bishop some twelve years: "With what patience," he wrote,[1] "have English Catholics suffered a priva-

[1] *Apologetical Epistle*, § 47.

tion of their civil rights on account of professing the Catholic religion; with what piety have they adhered and do still adhere, in the midst of the greatest grievances, to the ancient faith and the holy Apostolic See; with what liberality have they contributed out of their private property to the support of the public burthens of religion and charity! Let [any one] look into a list of the principal Catholics . . . and into the number of those who, residing neither in London nor in any principal town, support at their own charge, either wholly or partially, Catholic clergymen and the expenses of their chapels, and thus procure the comforts of religion to be administered, not only to themselves and their families, but to numerous Catholic congregations in the country residing in the neighbourhood of their mansions; let any one, I say, consider and reflect on this and then declare whether the English Catholics do not deserve the praise which I and the other Vicars Apostolic have with a common voice given them in our pastoral instructions."

Dr. Poynter was a man of refined and polished bearing, with a tall, commanding figure. He was not free from the ceremonious manner characteristic of those times, but in his inmost mind he was the most humble of men. Few have had

a greater power than he had of winning the confidence and affection of those with whom he came in contact; while his patience and forbearance under the gravest provocation were proverbial. He was anxious to resist the Cisalpines as far as was necessary, but preferred if possible to win them round by gentle means, which in view of the real goodness of their personal lives he was always hopeful of being able to do.

Dr. Milner, on the other hand, with his great gifts and downright nature, realizing clearly the proper position of Bishops in the normal government of the Church, and seeing that this had in fact been lost sight of by the members of the Catholic laity, simply hammered away with all the force of which his powerful mind was capable, without mincing his words, and having no special regard to the feelings of those whom he was attacking, or to the history of the past which had brought that state of things into being. He saw where the evil lay, and set himself to work to pluck it out by the roots. Like Dr. Poynter, he had had a Douay training, but, though consecrated Bishop the very same month, he was an older man by ten years, and had been already on the mission for a considerable time, so that he had seen the beginning and development of the Com-

mittee party more closely. Perhaps it was partly due to this that he was more suspicious of it.

Dr. Milner is often quoted as a champion of orthodoxy, to whom the Church in England owes great obligations during a time of crisis. If allusion is intended to the first and chief crisis in 1791, when, as has been said, he appeared on the scene at the eleventh hour and by his courage and activity procured the defeat of the Committee's party in Parliament, there can be no doubt that the Church owes much to him. But if we look at his career as a whole, and especially to that period of his episcopate when he put himself in opposition to the other Vicars Apostolic, considerable qualification becomes necessary. His vehemence of language at times gave offence, and alienated the sympathy of some who would naturally have been his supporters. He published pastorals openly attacking the administration of the other Bishops, who were in truth no less zealous for orthodoxy than he, though at times they were opposed to the strong measures which he advocated. In his private letters he more than once calls them "fautores schismatis incipientis." Indeed, he could never restrain himself from arguing against those from whom he differed, even though the difference was on unimportant

points. Some of his articles against opponents in the periodicals of the day would have been better left unwritten; and they eventually brought on him the censure of Rome, and a prohibition against his writing at all in the *Orthodox Journal*, then the only Catholic periodical.

In power of intellect, however, there can be no doubt that Dr. Milner held a high position. During the twenty-four years which he spent as priest at Winchester he was very active with his pen. His history of that city is a classic; even more generally known is his *End of Controversy*, which is still widely read, and of which an edition edited by Dr. Rivington has recently been published by the Catholic Truth Society. His *Letters to a Prebendary*, although of less permanent value, filled an important place in the controversy of the period; and other books of his might be mentioned which helped to make his reputation as a writer.

The town of Winchester was in the London District, to which Dr. Milner belonged; but when consecrated Bishop, in the year 1803, he had to move to Staffordshire, and eventually settled at Wolverhampton. He was often, indeed, up in London, where his rough and uncouth appearance was respected even by his enemies, for

there was no mistaking the powerful mind that lay behind it. He would walk through the streets of London carrying his own carpet bag, a custom which in those days indicated a complete contempt for conventionality, and would draw upon him the taunt that he was "no gentleman." But to such criticism he was absolutely indifferent. He had his work before him, and never did any man go more straight to the point than he did.

But his frequent visits to London did not compensate in these critical times for the disadvantage of not living there, and he was anxious for some rearrangement. He even went to Bishop Douglass and begged to be his Coadjutor,[1] if Dr. Poynter would be willing to change places with him. Dr. Douglass, however, firmly refused to agree to this, and although Dr. Milner obtained leave from Rome for prolonged visits to London in order to watch over the interests of the Irish Bishops, who had constituted him their agent, nevertheless the work of attending to his own district kept him often absent.

During the early part of Dr. Poynter's episcopate, several political events occurred to

[1] A four-page minute of the interviews which took place on January 29, 1806, and subsequent days, in Dr. Douglass's writing, is among our archives at St. Edmund's.

emphasize the differences between him and Dr. Milner. The well-known Veto Question[1] was in the air, and Dr. Milner's first acceptance of the proposal, followed by his subsequent strong denunciation of it, complicated the situation; so that it required all the tact and prudence of which Dr. Poynter was capable during the last years of Dr. Douglass's life, and afterwards when he succeeded him as Vicar Apostolic, to preserve unity in the Catholic body.

The history of the once celebrated Fifth Reso-

[1] The "Veto Question" was a proposal that in return for Catholic Emancipation the British Government should be granted some way of assuring themselves of the loyalty of those who were to be chosen as Bishops, and that it should take the shape of allowing them, under well-defined conditions, to veto one or more names of those of whose loyalty they might not be satisfied. The Irish Bishops accepted it in principle in their meeting at Maynooth in 1799, but by 1808 they had changed their views, and were ever afterwards strongly opposed to the granting of any kind of veto. Dr. Milner also became strong against it, and it was one of the chief points referred by him to Rome in 1814. Rome decided, however, that, under due restrictions, some such right of veto might reasonably be given to the Government. Nevertheless, looking back after a long interval, most Catholics will admit, now it is all over, that it was worth the few years' delay in securing Emancipation in order to preserve the absolute independence in episcopal elections which the Church in this country enjoys to-day.

It may be noted that Dr. Douglass was always an anti-vetoist.

lution must now be briefly alluded to. The resolution was in the form of a petition to Parliament, and therefore had to be signed. It was brought forward at a meeting of Catholics at the St. Alban's Tavern, on February 1, 1810, and its essence was expressed in its concluding words, which were as follows :—

"That the English Roman Catholics . . . are firmly persuaded that adequate provision for the maintenance of the civil and religious establishment of this kingdom may be made consistently with the strictest adherence on their part to the tenets and discipline of the Roman Catholic religion ; and that any arrangement founded on this basis of mutual satisfaction and security, and extending to them the full enjoyment of the civil constitution of their country, will meet with their grateful concurrence."

To Dr. Poynter this resolution appeared harmless, for it did not commit any one to anything definite, while it seemed also that it would help considerably in allaying the ungrounded suspicion of many Protestants that Catholics must necessarily be disloyal subjects, and would thus help to remove prejudice which stood in the way of Emancipation. Moreover, the general spirit displayed at the meeting constituted—in his opinion—a distinct *rapproche-*

ment between the laity and the Bishops, which called for a similar attitude on their part. He therefore signed the Resolution, as also did the other Vicars Apostolic, either at the meeting or afterwards at Dr. Douglass's house.

Dr. Milner, however, took another view of the meeting, which he regarded as disastrous, and he refused to sign the Resolution, professing to see in it what he described as "The Veto in its most hideous form."

Apparently Dr. Douglass was at first inclined not to attach much importance to Dr. Milner's refusal to sign, as he merely enters in his diary that such refusal was due to want of instructions from the Irish Bishops, and the fact that he was there as their representative. Soon, however, it appeared that Dr. Milner felt very strongly about it, and a long and bitter controversy ensued.[1] The other Vicars Apostolic

[1] The following anecdote will serve to show the acute nature of the controversy. Abbé Carron, of Somerstown, who is responsible for it, had always been friendly with Dr. Milner who, indeed, appointed him one of his two "theologians" at the Synod of Vicars Apostolic, in February, 1810—shortly after the meeting at which the Fifth Resolution was signed. Abbé Carron, however, excused himself from attending, on the score of being French. Shortly afterwards, Dr. Milner wrote him a long letter, in which he argued in his usual manner against the conduct of Dr. Poynter. The sequel can be given from a letter of

seem to have so resented his methods of action that they ceased to invite him to their meetings, a fact which he made one of the subjects of his appeal to Rome a few years later.[1]

Dr. Poynter, who learnt it direct from Abbé Carron : "On Friday, the 20th [of July, 1810], Bishop Milner went to Abbé Carron, to whom he had written the letter injurious to me. He reproached Abbé Carron for taking part against him by siding with me. The Abbé assured him that he was neutral, and merely had said that my letter was temperate, &c. ; 'but,' said the Abbé, 'I cannot say that of your Lordship's letters of him [Bishop Poynter] written to me' [Abbé Carron]. Bishop Milner then said, 'I never did write against him.' Abbé Carron : 'You wrote so and so, my Lord.' Bishop Milner : 'I never did.' Abbé Carron : 'Here are your letters.' Bishop Milner then took the letters, and after reading them, instantly without saying with your leave or by your leave, tore them in pieces, and rolling them into a ball, destroyed them : 'les jettait dans le feu.' Is not such an action a very expressive comment on the text of the letters ? and does it not show the meaning of them to have been too strong for Bishop Milner's nerves ?"

[1] There were three meetings of Vicars Apostolic at Durham in three successive years—1811, 1812, and 1813—at only one of which Dr. Milner was present. Both Husenbeth and Amherst seem unaware of the first of these meetings, and Husenbeth says in so many words (*Life of Milner*, p. 249) that certain documents published by Charles Butler are "strangely misdated 1811 instead of 1813." As a result, he draws false conclusions connecting Charles Butler and other laymen with the meeting of 1813, in which Father Amherst follows him. In view of the misconception on this point, it seems worth while to quote a

The next event of importance was the introduction of the Catholic Emancipation Bill of 1813. By this time Dr. Douglass was dead and Dr. Poynter was Vicar Apostolic. As originally drafted, there was not so very much to take serious exception to, though it contained a new form of oath to be taken by those who benefited under the proposed Act. During its passage through the House, however, it was further disfigured by some important clauses imposing restrictions which the Bishops could not have

few words from Dr. Douglass's diary about the meeting of 1811 ; it should be remembered that he was dead before either of the other two meetings :

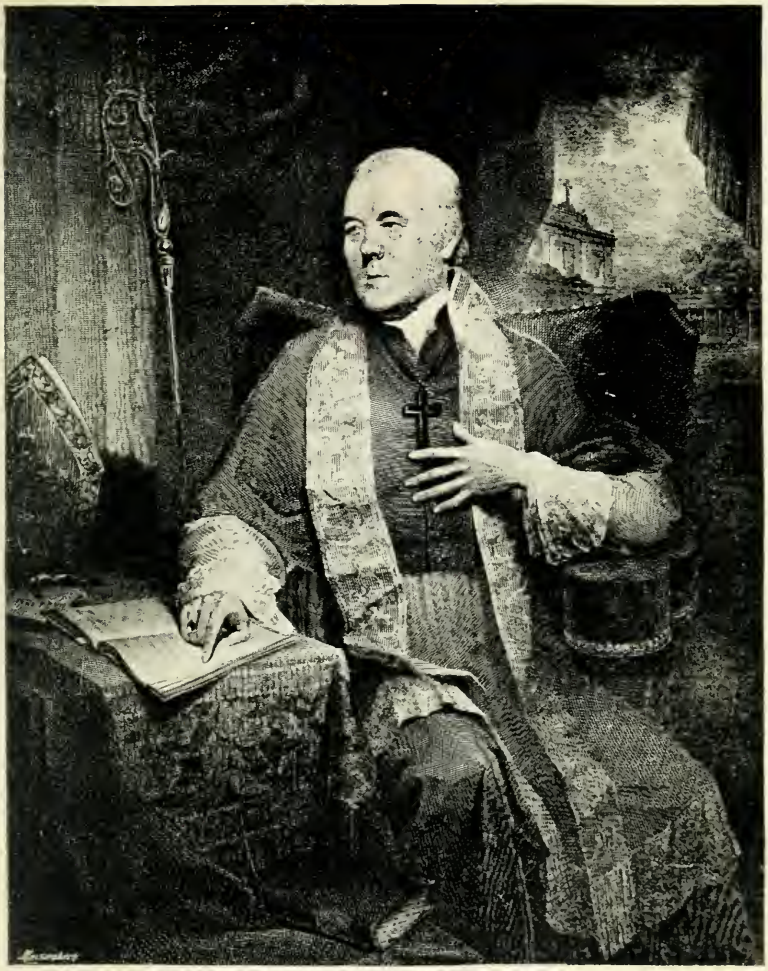
"1811. Bishop Milner wrote and required me to give him an account of my conduct towards Abbé de Trevaux, whom I had consented to be again indulged with spiritual faculties, and threatened to break communion with me. Bishop Milner also engaged Dr. Troy, Archbishop of Dublin, to do the same. Dr. Troy did so by a letter dated 31 July and addressed to me. This circumstance induced my Coadjutor, Dr. Poynter, to bring about a meeting of Vicars Apostolic at Durham, by and at which Bishop Gibson, his Coadjutor Bishop Smith, and Bishop Collingridge, and my Coadjutor, Dr. Poynter, justified my conduct towards l'Abbé de Trevaux, agreed to many resolves against Bishop Milner and the unlawful and vexatious interference of the Irish prelates, seven in number, with our government of our Districts. The above-mentioned meeting at Durham was held the latter end of August. Dr. Poynter returned to College for the Nativity of our Blessed Lady, Sept. 8th."

agreed to.[1] Dr. Milner contended that they were practically the outcome of the Catholics' own Fifth Resolution of three years before—a connection strenuously denied by the other party, and by Dr. Poynter himself. Dr. Poynter was, of course, opposed to the clauses, but seems to have been afraid to take any decided action in withstanding them until the arrival of the other Vicars Apostolic in London; and when one of them did arrive, Dr. Milner's aggressive attitude prevented any united action. In the event, in the Committee stage, the clause admitting Catholics to Parliament was thrown out by a majority of four votes, and the Bill was in consequence considered not worth proceeding with, and was dropped by the Government.

[1] The restrictions were chiefly two. The first was that every new Bishop on his appointment must obtain a certificate of his personal loyalty to the Crown, which was to be granted by Commissioners appointed for the purpose. These Commissioners were all to be Catholics, except the Lord Chancellor and one Chief Secretary of State, to be nominated by the Government. The Vicar Apostolic of the London District was to be a Commissioner *ex officio*. The second restriction was that if any bull, dispensation, or other instrument from the See of Rome were received, the person receiving it should be required to take an oath that it related wholly to spiritual matters, and did not concern any question of allegiance to the Crown; otherwise he would have to send a copy of it to the Commissioners.

But the question was far from settled. Anticipating that the Bill would be revived in some shape the following year, Dr. Poynter wrote to Rome for instructions as to certain points raised by it, and especially as to the lawfulness of taking the oath as it was set forth in the Bill. The Pope at that time was absent from Rome, the prisoner of Napoleon at Fontainebleau ; and the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda was likewise away. The answer to Dr. Poynter came from Mgr. Quarantotti, who was acting as Pro-Prefect of Propaganda, in the form of a Rescript which quickly became famous. He approved of the Bill practically as it stood, only pleading for a modification of the form of oath, and not even insisting on that.

Dr. Milner at once suspected that there was some secret influence at work at Rome, and likewise maintained that Mgr. Quarantotti had exceeded his powers in issuing the Rescript at all. He therefore took the most straightforward course, and started on a journey to Rome, in those days no small undertaking. He arrived in May, 1814, just after the solemn entry of Pius VII., who had been released from captivity, and, once there, he went far beyond the question of the Rescript, and formulated a regular appeal against the action of the English Bishops in his regard, as well as in other matters. Dr. Poynter had therefore to



BISHOP MILNER.

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[*To face page 32.*

follow him eight months later, when the whole question was gone into. It was evident on Dr. Poynter's arrival that strong language had been used about the conduct of the English Catholics generally. Most probably Dr. Milner's vigorous method of speaking and arguing had been taken to mean more than he really intended. Thus, for example, when Dr. Poynter asked for faculties to hear the Confessions of the English in Rome, he was met by a surprised inquiry from Cardinal Somaglia whether English Catholics really frequented the Sacraments.[1] In fact, the whole question had unfortunately come to be regarded as a national dispute, with Dr. Milner and the Irish on one side, against Dr. Poynter and the English Catholics on the other.

Dr. Poynter was given the opportunity of putting his side of the question, and he wrote a long document which he called *An Apologetical Epistle*, in which he defended himself against the various accusations, and put forward a counter appeal against Dr. Milner's action.[2] It would take

[1] These and the following particulars are taken chiefly from a Diary of Dr. Poynter's. See also Amherst, ii. p. 186.

[2] Dr. Poynter's *Apologetical Epistle* was not meant for publication, being addressed to his ecclesiastical superiors, who had called on him to explain his conduct. It was published five years later in Charles Butler's *Memoirs*, apparently without the eave of its author. Dr. Poynter,

too long to follow the various stages of the discussion which followed. Cardinal Littá, Prefect of Propaganda, said that Dr. Milner had been to blame in his method of attacking the other Bishops for their administration of their districts, and that he had told him so. Moreover, the decision on the question of the Veto was, as we have seen, against Dr. Milner, and, as he at first showed himself unyielding, it was contemplated that he should not return to England at all. Eventually, however, a *modus vivendi* was arrived at, but a strongly worded caution was given to Dr. Milner against his vehement method of writing and speaking.

Before matters were completed the Pope had once more to leave Rome, and the final arrangements were come to at Genoa, whither both Dr. Milner and Dr. Poynter had followed him. The directions as to what could be con-

indeed, carefully abstained on almost every occasion from publicly answering Dr. Milner's attacks and insinuations against him. I can only remember one pamphlet which he wrote on the question of the Fifth Resolution; and when he and Dr. Gibson wrote a pastoral after the meeting of 1813, explaining their view of that Resolution and of the abortive Bill of that year, not a word of recrimination is to be found, nor any allusion to all the hard things Dr. Milner had said of them: they confine themselves to exhortations to try and get the Bill renewed without the obnoxious clauses.

ceded in any future Bill for Emancipation were drawn out by Cardinal Littá, and embodied in a letter to Dr. Poynter. These instructions, which were to supersede those given by Mgr. Quarantotti,[1] touched three main questions. In the first place, conditions were given under which a limited form of veto could be granted to the Government in the nomination of Bishops; secondly, it was distinctly laid down that no clause interfering with perfect freedom of communication between the Bishops and Rome could even be discussed; and lastly, a form of oath was given which was considered suitable and safe, should any be required in a future Bill. Dr. Poynter returned to England in the summer of 1815, passing through Brussels a few days before the Battle of Waterloo. Dr. Milner had preceded him by some weeks.

The above history is a wearisome one, and has often been told; yet it has been necessary to allude to it here, in order to understand the phase which Catholic affairs were passing through in London during the first fifteen years of the last century. It had an important bearing on the gradual re-establishment of the episcopal position, and the general development on the

[1] Apparently the feeling in Rome was that Mgr. Quarantotti's action had been unwise and regrettable, but that he had not, strictly speaking, exceeded his powers.

lines of Challoner's prophecy. The friction with the Catholic aristocracy had the effect of driving the Bishops back on their own resources. After the Act of 1791—and even some time before—it was evidently necessary that the old mass-houses should be superseded by permanent churches, and that new missions should be opened, and new churches built. The responsibility of raising money for the building and support of these depended ultimately, not on the Catholic aristocracy—though they indeed supplied a great part of the subscriptions—but on the Bishops. At first this idea was so novel that recourse was had to special methods to guarantee such support. The mission would be advertised in the *Catholic Directory* as "supported by subscriptions, donations, or legacies by will;" a Committee of laymen was appointed to collect the money, and take other necessary steps to secure the requisite income for the "Chaplains," as they were still called. This method, however, did not work well. The laymen claimed a share in the management of the chapel, and difficulties arose between the Committee and the Chaplains, which sometimes led to a deadlock. We read, for example, of the Committee wishing Vespers and Benediction to be at one time, when the head Chaplain wished them to be at another.

The Chaplain asserted his rights by refusing to produce the Tabernacle key, while the Committee retaliated by withholding the key of the organ. After a time the Committees died out, and the whole burden of the temporal administration of the Church and mission was undertaken by the senior priest, exactly as is the case to-day. The same occurred with some of the Embassy Churches, which were at first only partially supported by the ambassadors, and then not at all, so that the whole responsibility of their maintenance fell on the head priest. It is an arrangement which serves to perpetuate the remembrance amongst us that this is a missionary country, where the temporal care of a mission is not a benefice, but a burden; and under such circumstances, the system—hard as it is on the clergy—has worked fairly satisfactorily. This system was coming into being in the second half of the eighteenth century and the opening of the nineteenth.

At the same time a project was set on foot to secure a proper "mensal fund" (as it is called) for the Bishop, so that he might be independent of the laity,[1] and be able to exercise his full

[1] During one of the disputes between a Vicar Apostolic and one of the most influential laymen of his "district," the latter brought pressure to bear by suppressing the allowance which he was accustomed to pay to the Bishop, and which formed the chief part of his means of living.

office and jurisdiction. In place of the old Douay College oath, a mission oath was substituted, the same that is still taken, by which the future priest pledges himself to serve his Bishop all his life. This no doubt served to bring the relations of priest and Bishop more close together; and the same effect was perhaps produced by the ecclesiastical students henceforth studying in England instead of abroad. Dr. Poynter, it need hardly be said, knew his students at St. Edmund's; while Dr. Milner took over and re-established Oscott on a similar basis in 1808, to meet a similar need.

Neither Dr. Milner nor Dr. Poynter lived to see Catholic Emancipation carried. The former died in 1826, the latter in 1827.[1] They left behind them the Cisalpine Club in a flourishing state as regards numbers, but with very little Cisalpinism in it; and the friction between laity and Vicars Apostolic was practically at an end. We may look on the reunion of Bishops and laity as the great work of Dr. Poynter's episcopate. When he was consecrated in 1803, the mutual mistrust was almost at its worst; by the end of his life the whole was a matter of history. This result was entirely achieved by his personal influence,

[1] Dr. Milner left Dr. Poynter a legacy of £5, as a sign of good will.

combined with a patience and long-suffering which sometimes laid him open to the charge of weakness, but which in the long run secured its end. Loyalty to the Bishops naturally brought with it loyalty to the Pope. The address of the Catholic laity to Pius VII in his misfortunes was drawn up during a period of party strife; but it served a good purpose. The Holy Father replied six months later, and although the part of the reply bearing on controversial matters was not in the terms that several of the laymen had hoped, nevertheless the general effect was all in favour of a more desirable attitude on their part. After this time we do not hear of any repetition of the language about the Holy See, which was, unfortunately, so common in the days of the Committee.

But though the relation of the laity to their Bishops has been marked ever since by perfect loyalty, the Catholic aristocracy has never regained the same control over ecclesiastical affairs which they possessed in the eighteenth century: for in the meantime the Bishops had become free and independent, and able to exercise their normal jurisdiction; while according to Challoner's prophecy, they had surrounded themselves with a new people, destined to increase and multiply in the centres of commerce and population, who

were already able to assist largely in the support of the Church, and who have since become numerous and powerful enough to render Catholic undertakings in every large city practically independent of outside assistance.

IV

THE FRENCH *EMIGRES* IN LONDON

BEFORE proceeding further, a few words must be said about another very powerful influence at work on the Catholics of England during the last years of the eighteenth century, and at the opening of the nineteenth. I allude to the influx of French Catholics—Bishops, priests and laymen—during the Reign of Terror. It is one of the most creditable facts in the history of our countrymen at that time, that, thoroughly Protestant though they were, they saw in these *emigrés* the victims of persecution, and not only received them hospitably, but even subscribed large sums of money for their support. In 1792, Dr. Douglass says that there were already 3,000 French priests in England. A more detailed estimate a year or two later gave 1,500 in London alone, and over 600 in the King's House at Winchester, which had been handed over to their use. In 1797, a

return issued by the Home Office showed that there were 5,000 priests and nearly 3,000 laymen supported by the Government, and 500 priests were supported "by their own industry, or by families"; while the French laymen, "not supported by Government, but living on the wrecks of their fortunes which they had saved," numbered 3,000. In 1801, according to an accurate return at the Alien Office, there were 30 French Bishops, 50 Vicars General, 5,600 clergy, and 4,000 laymen in England. These figures are all independent of the large number of priests and laymen in the island of Jersey.

The general conduct of the *emigrés* priests was such that Mr. Pitt said publicly in the House of Commons that in his opinion it had not been equalled since the early ages of Christianity. Mr. Wyndham spoke in the same sense, and the King specially exempted the French Bishops from the operation of the Aliens' Act, "in view of their meritorious conduct, and that of their respective clergy."

The behaviour of the exiled French laymen seems to have been no less commendable, and also drew forth the special praise of Mr. Pitt, who added "that they had in this period of danger come forward and offered their services under a Prince of the Blood, who actually came from

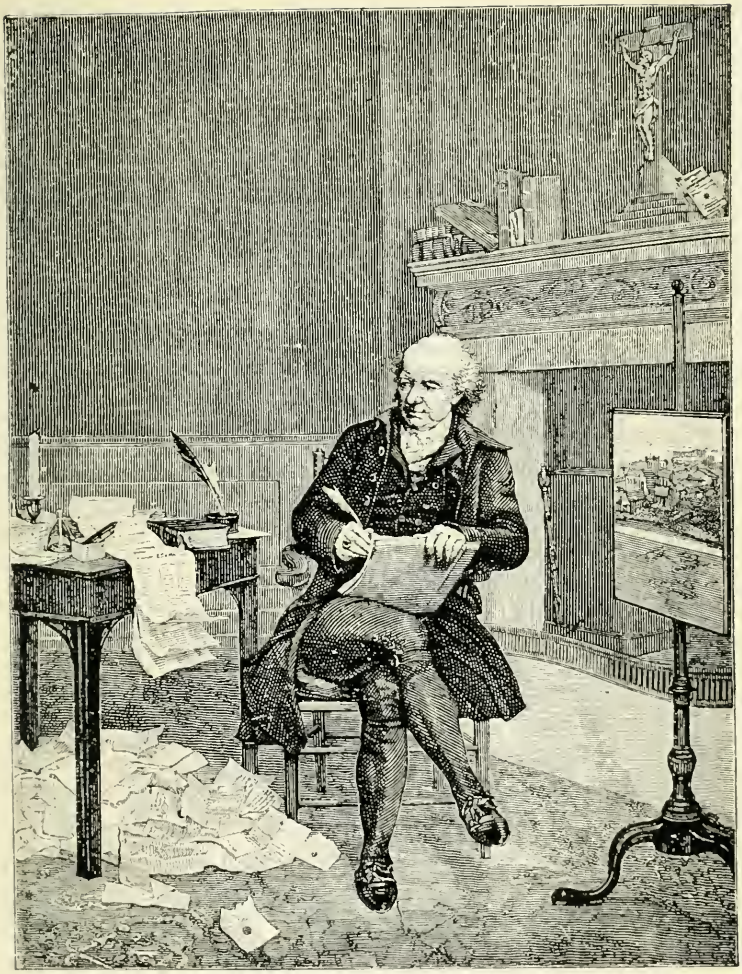
Holy Rood House to London to offer his service and that of the French nobility and gentry to Government, to oppose their breasts to the swords of their rebellious countrymen, should they invade the country which had so generously supported them."

Charles Butler, the well-known Catholic writer, bears similar testimony to their excellent conduct. "The lay emigrants" (he writes) "were chiefly composed of the provincial nobility. Their willing exertions to increase their small subsistence were truly honourable. With this view magistrates became preceptors; painting, drawing, and music were taught by ladies, who in happier hours had learnt them for ornament; the son refused no occupation which gave him the means of assisting his parent; the daughter was the maid-of-all-work to her family; and it is surprising how soon they qualified themselves, in one form or another, for useful employments: none thought that a disgrace which attachment to his king or love of his religion made necessary."

Not without a touch of quaint humour, Dr. Douglass proceeds to give in his diary a list of those whom he describes as "Bishops and Vicars General in London employed by me." They number five Archbishops, twenty-seven Bishops, and thirteen Vicars General. The most dis-

tinguished of these Bishops was Monseigneur François de la Marche, Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, a seaside town in Brittany, not far from Brest. His name occurs frequently in Dr. Douglass's diary, and he appears to have taken the lead through all the time that the French clergy were in London. He had been Bishop already nearly twenty years when the Revolution forced him to leave France. On his arrival in London, in the spring of 1791, he took up his abode in the house of Mrs. Dorothy Silburn, a widow, a native of Durham, who was devoting herself to works of charity on behalf of the exiled priests and laymen in distress. For very many years afterwards her name was on the lips of the French clergy, who never forgot what they owed to her extraordinary zeal and energy on their behalf in the days of their misfortune. Her house in Little Queen Street, Bloomsbury, soon became a centre for those in distress, and all money raised by subscription, both public and private, for their assistance, was administered there. Two committees were formed—one English, the other French—to provide for the organization of relief, and for the administration of the funds.

Nor was Mrs. Silburn alone in ministering to the unfortunate exiles. Many of the English saw and pitied their need, and helped them accord-



MONSEIGNEUR DE LA MARCHE.

Bishop of St. Pol de Leon.

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ing to their means. Many of them arrived in London in a state of absolute destitution, and went through great hardships. We read of large schoolrooms being fitted up as dormitories for priests, who, when they rose in the morning, did not know which way to turn to obtain the necessary food for the day, and their being frequently supplied by the charity of those who saw their want. It is also worthy of special mention that in the Middlesex Hospital a special ward was set apart for the French clergy and laity, in which mass was celebrated daily—an accommodation which, in those days, was truly remarkable.

The spiritual distress of the exiles was as great as their temporal privations. Bishop Douglass came to their assistance as well as he could. He gives the following particulars in his diary :—

"1792. I hired for them Mrs. Courtois' room, and supported two altars in it for the French priests' sole use. Also another for do. at Mr. Olivier's, Pall Mall. Also paid the expense of wax and wine in East Lane, Virginia Street, St. Patrick's, Moorfields, St. George's Fields, &c., many private chapels being allowed to them. . . . Père Beauregard gave a Retreat to the French clergy at the house of Fortune. Ditto at the King's House, Winchester. . . .

"1793. Père Beauregard gave a Retreat to the

French clergy resident at London in Lent, beginning the Retreat on the 11th of March, in the Chapel of St. Patrick, Soho. Ditto after Easter to the clergy and laity in the chapel of St. George's Fields. Ditto in the fortnight before Whitsunday to the French clergy and laity, again in St. Patrick's. I said mass for them, communicated many hundreds of them, and closed the Retreat with solemn Benediction and Te Deum."

Père Beauregard was an ex-Jesuit, and a celebrated preacher, but his retreats in London do not seem to have been quite a success. He preached in ultra-French style, with vehemence of language and abundant gesticulation; and when speaking of God's judgments on sinners and kindred topics, he adopted a tone, in keeping with the custom of the times, of addressing his hearers as though each one was the greatest sinner on earth. The rhetoric was too much even for his French audience. They resented his attitude towards themselves, not unmindful of the fact that they were in truth confessors for the faith. "According to Père Beauregard" (they said) "the people who turned us out from France were right after all."

But if he was too rhetorical for the French clergy, he was much more so for the people who were attracted by the unwonted sight of hundreds

of clerics assembling several times a day, and who followed them into the church out of curiosity. Catholic churches were rare enough in those days, and it is very probable that many of these people had never been inside one before. Most of them were, of course, unable to understand what the preacher was saying, and probably looking upon his elaborate gesticulations as part of the mysterious "Popery" of which they had heard, gave way to their laughter. The few who could understand French, on the other hand, were the reverse of edified. A Protestant clergyman is said to have attended several sermons at St. Patrick's, and to have remarked to the clergy as they went out at the end, "Either you are a pack of scoundrels, or he is the greatest liar in Europe."

The scene on the concluding morning, however, when Dr. Douglass gave communion to some thousand priests, impressed everybody; it was an occasion almost unique in the history of the Church. The French clergy themselves were deeply touched by the way in which Dr. Douglass had received them on their arrival in London, and the truly paternal manner in which he had done all in his power to provide for their spiritual needs. Their feelings found expression in an address to him, published as a preface to a book

written by one of them in the year 1800,[1] in which they offered him their sincere thanks.

With so many priests in London and no systematic form of ecclesiastical government, it is no wonder that there were irregularities from time to time; and the facts in the following extract, again from Dr. Douglass, ought not to surprise us :—

"Mgr. de St. Pol de Léon complains to me that certain French priests say mass in improper places, viz., in their own bedchambers, which are small and dirty; also that faculties for Confession are granted without due discernment, that some of the French Vicars General are not so prudent as could be wished in granting powers to confess, &c. Accordingly he begged of me to authorise him to correct these abuses. . . Rev. Mr. Hodgson tells me that some French priests in France took the liberty of saying mass without vestments and without lights, as also many other things with a disregard of the rubrics. In England some French priests used paper vestments, which I forbade in the London District."

No doubt the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon would

[1] *Doctrine du Concile de Trente*, par l'Abbé Gofvry. The author was a Sulpician, who died in exile at Jersey; his book was published after his death by some of his former pupils.

FRENCH CHAPEL.

Little George Street, Portman Square.

(Modern.)

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have taken suitable means to stop abuses, and as time went on and the position of the French clergy seemed likely to last for some while, some permanent "New Regulations for the French priests, for the more decent celebration of the sacrifice of the mass" were published two years later.

The French Chapels.

Bishop Douglass enumerates eight French Chapels in London, at the time he wrote, viz., January, 1800.[1] Of these only one exists to-day, namely, the little quaint church near Portman Square, sometimes called King Street, sometimes, more accurately, Little George Street, which is a small turning out of King Street.

It was established in 1799 by Abbé Bourret, a Sulpician Father from Montreal, and soon became the regular centre for the French Catholics in London. It is said that there used to be masses going on four at a time continuously all the morning till past one o'clock, and that it was a common sight to see there fifteen or twenty Bishops and several members of the Royal Family

[1] There were: (1) Dudley Court, Crown Street, Soho; (2) Conway Street, Fitzroy Square; (3) Brill Path, Somers Town; (4) Prospect Place, St. George's Fields; (5) King Street, Portman Square; (6) Paddington Green; (7) Tottenham Place; (8) Polygon, Somers Town.

of France. After the Restoration it was officially styled the Chapel Royal of France ; but from 1830 it ceased to have this title and became like any other London mission, though always conducted by French clergy, and the greater part of the congregation has likewise always been French. The building has not been materially changed, and remains to the present day a memorial of the period when the French Catholics exiled in London worked and lived in these humble surroundings, with a spirit of faith and religion worthy of the best traditions of the "Eldest Daughter of the Church."

The French royalty in England at that time included the Count de Provence (Louis XVIII), the Count d'Artois, or "Monsieur" (afterwards Charles X), who had lodgings in Welbeck Street ; the Duke d'Orleans (afterwards Louis Philippe), who with his two brothers, the Dukes of Montpensier and Beaujolais, lodged in Sackville Street ; the Prince de Condé, the Duke de Bery,[1] &c. When in London they all frequented the French Chapel in King Street ; but for special occasions, when this was too small, they would go to St. Patrick's, Soho. The following letter[2] describes a requiem for the Duke

[1] These details are taken from Dr. Douglass's Diary.

[2] *Fernyngham Letters*, i. p. 238.

d'Enghien, who had been shot by Napoleon; and gives a vivid if somewhat colloquial description of the French royalty who assisted. The writer was Lady Jerningham, the wife of Sir William Jerningham, of Cossey Hall, Norfolk.

"There was yesterday a very Solemn Service given at St. Patrick's Chapel for the Duc d'Enghien by all the French. It is said that about 1,400 people were present; the whole square was an *embarras* of Coaches, for the Protestants, I believe, exceeded the Catholicks.

"The whole Chapel was Hung in Black, with escutcheons of Fleurs de Lys, no Light but from Wax Tapers, an immense Catafalque in the middle supposed to Contain the Corpse, with all the insignia of his orders, his Coronet and naked Sword Laid on the Top. Mrs. J. went with me, and we were well placed for Seeing all I wanted to examine. *Primo*, we were near the altar (the Bishop of Montpellier officiated) facing the Princes, whom I could examine without being observed, the first Row being occupied by three Cordons Bleus, and all the Red Ribbons, Monsieur, the Duc of Bery, and the three Princes of Orléans in Black with their Blue Ribbons, at a Long *prie-Dieu* behind Monsieur. . . . I am particularly partial to Monsieur; nothing can look more good-natured and at the same time dignified.

His Son has a Species of little tyger face, but is well thought of; the Duke of Orleans well looking; Duke of Montpensier frightful, and the Compte de Beaujolais very pretty and pleasing. L'Abbé de Bouvan preached, and extremely well. It was a sort of Oraison funèbre, accompanied with very Religious Sentiments. He ended by Calling upon the Spirit in the Catafalque to Come forth and vouch for the necessities He had pointed out, of obtaining God's mercy (to withdraw His wrath from France) by great reformation of manners in all that belonged to that unhappy Soil. A Ridiculous little French Woman (Madame de Wilfort) was, or pretended to be, frightened at the Summons, and had an hysterical fit, to the annoyance of her neighbours, for she screamed out, and, as some French novel mentions, 'se permit toutes les simagrées d'une frayeur ridicule.'"

Of the other French chapels besides King Street mentioned by Dr. Douglass, all save one had disappeared by 1805, by which time the majority of the priests had returned to France. The one exception was the chapel in Conway Street (now Southampton Street), Fitzroy Square, which is still standing, though it has long since ceased to be used as a place of worship. The founder of this chapel was Abbé Carron, who was perhaps the most distinguished of all the

FRENCH CHAPEL, CONWAY STREET, FITZROY SQUARE.

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French *emigrés*, and a well-known figure in London a century ago, both among Catholics and Protestants. He appears to have been a man of extraordinary zeal and activity. Having been ordained priest at Rennes in 1782, he had already set on foot many pious and charitable undertakings when the Revolution forced him to leave France. His first place of exile was Jersey, and during his four years there he found time to establish a chapel and school for the French emigrants. Coming to London in 1796, during his eighteen years' residence there he opened two chapels—one for the English and French together, the other for the French only; two hospitals, one of which was for priests; boarding schools for French boys and girls; a library for the use of *emigrés* priests; and other works. We are told that Dr. Douglass began to express his fears as the Abbé came to him time after time to ask his approbation for the establishment of some new work. These fears he expressed to another of the *emigrés*, saying that there was no regular source for obtaining funds, and he was afraid of some of the works not succeeding. "Don't be in the least afraid of that," said the priest; "from his infancy the Abbé Carron has been full of projects for the poor, and he has not yet failed in one."

This prediction was fully verified, so long as

Abbé Carron remained in England to direct his works in person, and so long as there was need for them. Gradually, however, as the number of French residents in London decreased, these works one by one came to an end; and when Carron himself returned to France in 1814,[1] his French Chapel near Fitzroy Square was finally closed. The chapel in Clarendon Square, which was opened in 1808, was used by the English Catholics as well as by French, and Abbé Nerinckx who had been Carron's assistant, continued his ministrations there for some forty years longer, during which time the church became quite anglicised; and as an English church it exists to the present day. Its appearance has changed very little since the time when Abbé Carron was there, and it remains an interesting survival of the type of church commonly put up at that period. The façade is especially typical, and almost looks as though specially meant to exemplify Pugin's Contrasts, for it is much larger than the real front of the building itself. In the

[1] Abbé Carron was in London again in 1815, and did not finally leave England until after the Battle of Waterloo. He was followed by Mr. Thomas Weld, who had lately become a widower, and assisted Abbé Carron in his charitable works in Paris, where he was ordained priest in 1821. He subsequently became a Cardinal, and was known as "the Cardinal of the Seven Sacraments."

SOMERS TOWN CHAPEL.

(Modern.)

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interior of the church three interesting monuments arrest attention. One is a carved figure of the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, who died in 1806, and was buried in the St. Pancras Cemetery hard by; another is a marble bust of the founder of the church, Abbé Carron, who died in Paris on March 15, 1820; the third is in memory of Abbé Nerinckx, who lived till the days of the Gothic revival, and his memorial is a tablet carved in that style. He died in 1855.

Many others of the French clergy were very active during their stay in England, and numerous pious works were set on foot by them. Most of these were naturally directed to the needs of their own countrymen; but a certain number of the clergy, both in London and the provinces, had resolved to make their permanent home in this country, and established missions, some of which exist to the present day. Among those in London and its neighbourhood may be mentioned that at Hampstead, where the church built by Abbé Morel in 1815 is still in use; Tottenham, where the mission was established in 1794 by Abbé Cheireux, afterwards Cardinal Archbishop of Bordeaux; and Chelsea, then outside London, where Abbé Voyaux de Franous settled about the year 1812. He built a church in Cadogan Terrace, which remained in use

till the present one was opened close by in 1879.

In 1801 Napoleon's Concordat with the Holy See was signed, and the following year it was solemnly ratified in Paris. The text reached London on Palm Sunday, 1802. Dr. Douglass describes rather graphically the feeling of surprise not unmixed with resentment, which it caused among many of the French clergy. "It has already given birth to much discussion among the French," he writes. "Almost all . . . are grievously hurt in mind by the contents . . . and talk against the Pope's condescension. At every article they startle and express amazement at the consequences likely to result to the Church, &c."

As a result of the resettlement of religion, the majority of the *emigrés* priests as well as laymen returned to France in the course of the year 1802. Not so, however, the Bishops, for one of the stipulations was that they should all resign their sees, so that the reconstituted Church in France might begin anew, with a fresh hierarchy. By no means all of them consented to resign, and there was much negotiation between those in London and others elsewhere. There were also unfortunately a certain number of priests who refused to accept the Concordat. They were known as Blanchardists, after the Abbé Blanchard

who was their chief. Their motive seems to have been political rather than religious, and they adhered closely to the French royal family, on whom they rested their hopes. Measures were eventually taken by the Bishop of the London District to enforce their submission under the penalty of not being allowed to say mass. Dr. Milner, however, considered the measures not drastic enough, and did not hesitate to say so. He attributed the length of time that the schism lasted to want of vigour in the enforcement of the test which all the Bishops had agreed on ; while Dr. Douglass and Dr. Poynter considered that by not being too hasty they would win back many priests whom too abrupt measures might only harden.

Besides the Blanchardists, there remained in England a considerable number of orthodox French priests and laymen, and their presence had a great influence on the Catholic Church in this country, far greater than is represented by the half-dozen churches or missions founded by a few of them. They imparted a French tone to much English Catholic work, and the English priests who had been educated at Douay were able to enter into their spirit. Indeed, all our ecclesiastical traditions at that time were French in origin ; for as one of the main ends put before the students at

Douay by Cardinal Allen was to familiarize themselves with Catholic traditions by contact with them in a Catholic country, it was only natural that they should look upon the French ones as their ideals. These facts no doubt explain the absolutely French character of the London churches down to the time of Cardinal Wiseman.

V

BISHOP DOUGLASS, VICAR APOSTOLIC OF THE LONDON DISTRICT

HAVING obtained some idea of what may be called the Catholic politics of a century ago, we are now in a position to examine the Catholic London of that period in detail. We naturally begin with the Bishop's house. This was No. 4, Castle Street, Holborn. The street still exists—its modern name is Furnival Street—and the house is now a small restaurant. Before inquiring into its appearance in the time of Dr. Douglass, we may perhaps with advantage remind ourselves of a few facts about London itself, and the extraordinary change which has come about in the course of a century in the appearance of the city and the life of the people.

The metropolis in 1805 included London proper, Westminster and Southwark, and the population was just under a million. Chelsea and Hammersmith to the West, Stratford and

Tottenham to the East, and Hampstead to the North, were all in the country. Many of the chief London thoroughfares with which we are now familiar did not exist then. Oxford Street was there, and Holborn ; but they were not, as now, joined together, as the part now called New Oxford Street had not yet been built ; and of course there was no Holborn Viaduct, but a steep hill down and up. The name Regent Street tells its own date. All the parish of St. Giles, including the part round Seven Dials, was full of the poorest classes of the population, many of them being Irish, so that the neighbourhood was often spoken of as "Little Ireland."

There were three bridges across the Thames, not one of which exists to-day ; they have all been rebuilt. Old London Bridge, with which we are familiar in pictures, was then still standing, though in a state of dilapidation, and the houses which used to be part of the bridge had been removed half a century before. The whole was rebuilt in 1825–31. The other two bridges were Blackfriars and Westminster ; the former was rebuilt in 1864–67, the latter in 1855–62. The south side of the Thames was almost rural in appearance. St. George's Fields were large open meadows, though surrounded by buildings ; but the actual country was at no great distance.

In order to form an idea of the appearance of the London streets when filled with life, we must further remember the change which has taken place since that time in the costumes of the pedestrians, and the character of the vehicles in common use. The "man in the street" a hundred years ago looked very different from his counterpart of to-day. The vehicles were built in accordance with the requirements of the rough, ill-paved streets; for the days of macadamized roads and block paving were still far off. The only public conveyances for London itself were the large awkward "hackney coaches," though post-chaises coming from or going to the country were a frequent sight; and in the neighbourhood of the main thoroughfares, passing stage coaches were often to be seen. Private carriages were of course common enough, of a large and cumbrous pattern, with coachman and footman in elaborate livery; and an occasional sedan chair was still to be met with, though these were rapidly going out of fashion. At night the streets were badly lit by oil lamps, sometimes attached to brackets from the walls, sometimes on lamp posts, or to the gates or railings of the larger houses; and the watchman, with lantern and hood, went his rounds, calling out the time at intervals during the night.

"Link men," who now appear only rarely and in the densest of fogs, were then to be seen every night, conducting people from place to place through the ill-lighted streets. The fixed extinguishers for their use can still be seen on some of the older houses, especially in the squares, on either side of the doorways.

The number of Catholics in London was estimated at about 45,000, with another 15,000 in the home counties. But the so-called London District extended much further afield than this. In Challoner's time it included all the British possessions in North America. This arrangement came to an end with the American War of Independence; but when Dr. Douglass was Bishop, the District still included the West Indian Islands (except Trinidad), and, of course, Jersey and Guernsey; while by the time of Dr. Poynter, Australia had been added.[1]

Dr. Douglass was elected Vicar Apostolic in the latter part of 1790, and was consecrated at Lulworth on December 19th of that year. Though his name suggests a Scotch origin, he was in fact a native of Yorkshire. Having

[1] A picture of Dr. Poynter has recently been put in a stained-glass window at Sydney Cathedral, where he is described as the first bishop who exercised jurisdiction in the colony.

studied his full course at Douay, he taught for a time at the English College at Valladolid; and after his return to England in 1773, we find him on the mission, first at Linton, then at York. His election to the London District brings us once more across the proceedings of the Catholic Committee party. They were anxious to secure Bishop Charles Berington; some of them held a meeting on the subject, and, having chosen the man they wanted, appear to have notified that choice to Rome for confirmation. The meeting, however, was not unanimous, and some even then voted for Dr. Douglass; but this fact probably had nothing to do with his election. When the appointment was made known, a few of the extremists were at first disposed to protest; but any inclination of that kind very soon subsided, and the English Catholics had too much sense to seriously oppose the decision of Propaganda. The London clergy, most of whom were more or less in sympathy with the Committee party,[1] sent a special address to the Holy Father assuring him of their loyal acceptance of the pastor appointed by him. Nevertheless to take

[1] A considerable number of the London clergy signed the well-known Appendix of the Third "Blue Book," though some of them did so with expressed reservations, and they all seem to have accepted its condemnation.

charge of a district under such conditions was not an easy task, and Dr. Douglass had need of all his patience as well as firmness to preserve peace and at the same time to maintain the proper rights of the episcopate. He had also to confront the difficulties of the sudden influx of French priests and laymen to which I have alluded, and also of the members of the English colleges and convents, driven out of France by the Revolution, who reached London often in a state of destitution. These difficulties gave him enough, and more than enough, to occupy his care and thought during the twenty-one years of his episcopate. He was a man of unusual kindness of disposition, with a calmness of judgment and action in keeping with his Scotch descent, while by no means wanting in firmness when occasion demanded.

A very vivid description of Bishop Douglass at his residence in Castle Street is found in a book—*Priestly Absolution at Oxford*[1]—by a well-known writer, Mr. Henry Digby Beste, in which he describes his own reception into the Church : the conversion of an Anglican clergyman was a rare event in those days ; I may perhaps be excused for quoting it in full :—

"On May 17, 1798, I was present at High Mass

[1] P. 218.

in St. Patrick's Chapel: it was the festival of the Ascension. My emotion was very great, but it called forth no indecorous signs of surprise or curiosity in those near me. I forgot to inquire at the sacristry the address of the Bishop; and next morning found myself walking in Hyde Park, alarmed at the step I was about to take, and almost undecided. A friend, who was in my confidence, met me by chance; and out of regard for my tranquility, though a Protestant, encouraged me to persevere. We turned into Grosvenor Square and up Duke Street; old Mr. Keating [1] informed us that the Bishop lived at No. 4, Castle Street, Holborn. 'We please ourselves by calling it the Castle.' I parted from my friend and proceeded to the Castle alone. An elderly, rather pompous, duenna-looking woman opened the door of the house, for such it was—not the gate of a castle. His Lordship was engaged; but I was desired to walk into the dining-room, which no doubt served as an anteroom for want of any other. While I was here, a French priest came in, who, evidently alarmed at his approaching interview with the Bishop, from

[1] [Mr. Patrick Keating kept a Catholic shop in Warwick Street; but afterwards moved to Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, where he took over the business of Mr. Coghlan, who died in 1800. His son, Mr. George Keating, edited the *Laity's Directory*, from 1801 to 1839.]

whom probably he had 'something to ask or something to fear,' inquired of me, 'Faut-il faire une genuflexion à Monseigneur?' I answered that I was unacquainted with the ceremonial expected by Monseigneur, but that he (M. l'Abbé) had better do as he would to his own Bishop. He had taken me for a countryman, but 'my speech bewrayed me.' He was called for before me: this I thought unjust; but in a few minutes the Bishop came in and addressed me with, 'Qu'est-ce que vous demandez, Monsieur?' Again! thought I; my country is about to be lost to me. But let us hope for a better. I told Dr. Douglass the purport of my visit; and he, seeing the affair was one not quickly to be despatched, requested me to walk upstairs. We seated ourselves on each side of the fire in an old-fashioned wainscoted room, with corresponding furniture, the floor half covered by a well-worn Turkey carpet. On the walls, yellow with smoke hung portraits which, through the soot which encrusted them, I hardly discerned to be ecclesiastical worthies: Cardinal Allen, perhaps, founder of the College of Douay—a Campion or Arrowsmith, or other martyrs of the Reformation. A crucifix was in a conspicuous place. Over the chimney a little engraving of Pius VI, then a prisoner. The Bishop was a tall thin man, between

HOUSE OF THE VICARS APOSTOLIC.

4, Castle Street, Holborn.

(Modern.)

[*To face page* 66.

sixty and seventy, of a healthy look, with a lively and good-natured countenance. He wore a suit of black, not very fresh, with a little close white wig. Martinus Scriblerius was proud of being able to form an abstract idea of a Lord Mayor without his gold chain, or red gown, or any other accidents. I had no difficulty in detecting the Bishop in the plain man before me, for being in his own house, he showed without reserve his pastoral cross, and I saw on his finger a ring on which was set an amethyst.

"'This is a very important step, sir; no doubt you have given it due consideration?' I gave a succinct account of my studies and motives. 'May I ask, have you consulted your family and friends?'—'My parents are not living: I am their only surviving child. For my friends, I know beforehand what they would say.'—'Are you aware of the *civil* consequences? The penal laws are repealed, but you will lose your *état civil*." I bowed my head. 'As you are in Orders of the Church of England, your conversion will excite more than ordinary surprise and (I say it only to warn you) ill-will against you.'—'I trust not: people are sufficiently indifferent about such matters.'—'Perhaps you will lose some ecclesiastical benefice?'—'I have proceeded no further than deacon's orders, and therefore have no pre-

ferment.'—'But your expectations?'—'I must live without them.'

"After a little more probing of this sort, and a short pause,—'There is a business which is very distressing to those who are not used to it, as it is very consoling to those who are. I mean confession: we all go to confession: I who am a bishop—the pope himself. You know, I presume, that you must begin by that?'—'I come to beg of your Lordship to appoint me a priest.' After a little consideration, 'Would you wish your priest to be an old man or a young one?'—'My Lord, you know your subjects better than I do. I leave the choice to you. His age is to me a matter of indifference.'—'Many people think otherwise. However, if you will be pleased to call here to-morrow at this hour, I will introduce him to you.' I took my leave without a genuflexion, but with a strong sentiment of respect and kindness for this worthy amiable old man.

"The next day, I found in Castle Street the Rev. Mr. Hodgson, one of the priests of the chapel of St. George's Fields. Of him, as I do not know but that he is still living, I shall only say that I had every reason to be satisfied with his conduct and counsels, and that I think of him with gratitude. I passed with him a part of every morning

of the following week, except Sunday and Thursday, at his house near the Chapel; and in this Chapel of St. George, May 26th, the festival of St. Augustine's, Apostle of England, was admitted to the one fold under the protection, as I humbly hope, of the one Shepherd."

Returning for a moment to "the Castle," we may find another, though short description of it, in a letter of one who has passed away within the memory of many of us. I mean old Provost Doyle, who built the present St. George's Cathedral, who is perhaps better known under his *nom-de-guerre*—"Father Thomas." "What changes have taken place within my recollection," he writes, "in the offices of Holy Week, that is as to the way of celebrating them. Dr. Bramston used to describe with much effect the Tenebræ in Castle Street, Holborn, where he, a limb of the law, and Charles Butler, another limb, and the Rev. Mr. Lindow, and Bishop Douglass, met in the 'episcopal palace' in an upper chamber, at the fourth house on the right hand—and a dirty, dingy, shabby-genteel house it was—for the purpose of reciting the Divine Office. They met and separated, too thankful that even that much was done, and hoped for better days." The date of what is here described must have been between 1791, when

Dr. Douglass came to London, and 1793, when Dr. Bramston went to Lisbon to study for the priesthood.

Both Dr. Bramston and Mr. Charles Butler were men of unusual interest, though of extremely opposite character and antecedents. The former, a convert and a University man, became a priest, and eventually Bishop of the London District; the latter, coming from an old Catholic stock, was educated at Douay—a man of sterling piety of the old type, a distinguished lawyer and a learned writer, but chiefly known to us now as having been one of the leading spirits of the Cisalpine party. Of both these two I shall have something to say presently. The fourth man mentioned, Rev. John Lindow, was the aged Dean of the Chapter, the same who recorded the prophecy of Bishop Challoner mentioned on the first page of this book. He subsequently retired to St. Edmund's College, where he died in 1806.

Dr. Douglass lived in the same house with his Vicar-General, Rev. James Barnard, the friend and biographer of Challoner. When he died, in 1803, Rev. Joseph Hodgson, who has just been mentioned, became Vicar General, and came across from St. George's Fields to live at "the Castle." He had been Vice-President of Douay when the College broke up, and to him we owe

the long account of the imprisonment of the Collegians printed in the *Catholic Magazine* in 1831; he was, in fact, himself the priest who went out into the town of Doullens disguised as a French citizen, to administer the last Sacraments to one who was dying.

Having mentioned the Dean of the Chapter, a few words about the "Old Chapter" itself will perhaps be in place. The Vicars Apostolic had, of course, no regular Canons in the different districts, and the status of the so-called Chapter has been the subject of long-standing dispute. It was established under the first Vicar Apostolic of all England, Dr. Bishop, in 1623, on whose death the following year the Chapter sent up a *terna* for the election of a successor. One of the three, Dr. Smith, was appointed by Rome. He had, however, to spend most of his episcopal life out of England. When he died, for thirty years there was no Bishop at all, and the Chapter claimed, and actually exercised, jurisdiction. When, under James II., Dr. Leyburn was created Vicar Apostolic, he was required to take an oath not to recognise the Chapter, and a few years later, a decree was issued suspending all jurisdiction of Chapters of regulars and seculars during the time the Vicars Apostolic were in England. The Chapter had, it appears, offended Rome by

constantly refusing to receive a Vicar Apostolic, and demanding an Ordinary. Moreover, when Rome offered to confirm the Chapter on condition of having the appointment of some of its officers, they absolutely refused such a condition. The Chapter submitted to the decree against them, but kept up their body, hoping for better days. Most of the Vicars Apostolic were members of the Chapter, and the meetings for the appointment of a Dean, &c., were held in the Bishop's private Chapel at Castle Street. At one time Dr. Bramston was Dean, and Dr. Poynter only a Canon, so that at Chapter meetings Dr. Bramston sat before his master, Dr. Poynter. This state of affairs went on till the re-establishment of the Hierarchy in 1850, when Chapters were established in each diocese; but not wishing to dissolve, the Old Chapter contented themselves with changing their name, and as the "Old Brotherhood of the Secular Clergy," they exist to the present day. They have considerable funds at their disposal, out of which they pay the expenses of their meeting twice a year; and they distribute certain trust moneys in charities. Their new members are still elected according to the old ecclesiastical division of England—a fixed number being taken from each of the old districts, without reference to

modern dioceses. This was the same a hundred years ago as to-day, and as they never exercised any canonical functions, their duty then as now began and ended with their half-yearly meetings and the distribution of their trust funds.

VI

ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE

NEEDLESS to say, a Vicar Apostolic had no cathedral nor even a pro-cathedral, and from Dr. Douglass's time onwards, such pontifical functions as there were took place always at St. Edmund's College. It was there that the Holy Oils were blessed on Maundy Thursday, and of course all ordinations were held there. Moreover, in most instances, new Bishops or Vicars Apostolic received their consecration at Old Hall. Between 1800 and 1810 four were consecrated, one for each "District" into which England was divided—London, Northern, Midland and Western. The London Bishop Coadjutor, Dr. Poynter, lived at the College—he was President—and Dr. Douglass was a frequent visitor. The College was more accessible, in proportion to the times, then than now, for it was on the main coaching road to Cambridge, and could be reached from "the Castle" in a postchaise in

well under three hours.[1] It is worthy of remark that Dr. Milner preached his first episcopal sermon at Old Hall, at the consecration of Dr. Poynter in 1803, having been himself consecrated at Winchester the previous week; and all the Vicars Apostolic being present, a quasi-synod was held—the first part at Winchester, the last part at St. Edmund's—and matters of importance to the Church were discussed and settled. And it was at a meeting of the Vicars Apostolic in the President's room at St. Edmund's two years earlier, that it was finally determined to abandon the idea of re-establishing the English College at Douay.

Indeed, a century ago, Old Hall was in every respect the centre of London Catholicity and all available resources were concentrated there, for it was felt that the whole future of the ministry depended on the development and prosperity of the College. It was essentially *the* work of the later Vicars Apostolic and one of its most appropriate features to-day is the collection of tombs of the Bishops of the London District in the Chapel cloister and the Chapel itself. Any account of the London District in 1805 without a description of the College would be incomplete.

[1] On one occasion Dr. Douglass laid a wager that he would get from the College to his house under the two and a half hours, and wrote that evening to say that he "had won ye bet."

The original school at Old Hall has already been alluded to, as the property of Bishop Talbot, who had established it in the year 1769.[1] At his death he left it to the Bishop of the London District, and hence it was available for the reception of the students from Douay when they began to arrive during the Reign of Terror. The first group of these were collected together by Dr. Douglass in November, 1793, and a formal start was made on the 16th of that month, the feast of St. Edmund's of Canterbury, under whose protection the new beginning was placed. It was not, however, until nearly two years after this that the arrangement became permanent. So long as the superiors and many of the students were in prison in France, no final arrangements were possible. When they reached England in March, 1795, a difference of opinion existed whether there should be one College founded in England to do the work of Douay, or two, one in the North and the other in the South ; and in the former case, whether the one should be in the north of

[1] Before that date, the school existed at Standon Lordship, about two miles off, where it was opened in 1753 ; but it seems to have been even then considered as a continuation of a previous school, at Twyford, Hants, which dated back in some form to the reign of James II. See *History of St. Edmund's College* (Kegan Paul, 1893).

England or near London. In the event, however, the latter alternative prevailed; and Crook Hall, in Durham, and St. Edmund's, at Old Hall, which had both been carried on during the period of discussion, now became permanent.

The last actual President of Douay, Rev. John Daniel, was asked to become President of St. Edmund's, and a year later he was definitely appointed as such by Propaganda; but he persisted in his refusal, wishing to keep himself free to reclaim the Douay funds from the French Government should circumstances permit. Dr. Douglass therefore appointed Dr. Gregory Stapleton President, with Dr. Poynter, who had been Prefect of Studies at Douay, to hold the same office at St. Edmund's, and to be Vice-President as well.

Dr. Stapleton belonged to the family of the late Lord Beaumont, and was the seventh son of Nicholas Stapleton, of Carlton, Yorkshire. His qualifications for his new post were chiefly of a practical nature. For twelve years he had been Procurator at Douay College, and had administered the funds with success and economy. He had afterwards been President of the English College at St. Omer, where he had had Daniel O'Connell, the future "Liberator," as one of his boys, and it was no doubt his success in the

administration of that College which prompted Dr. Douglass to entrust to him his care, the new foundation of Old Hall.

Dr. Douglass had great hopes for the future of St. Edmund's, and the following words of his, from a letter to Bishop Walmesley, are worth quoting in full :—

"I have proceeded to fix the College at Old Hall Green," he writes. "Mr. Daniel having declined to accept the presidency of it, I appointed Mr. Stapleton, late President of St. Omer's, to be President of it, and Mr. Poynter to be the Vice-President. Almost all the Masters or Professors of Douay or St. Omer's belonged to the London District; they are now employed in the new College; and I am happy in saying that young men of more shining talents, or greater character for virtue, discipline, and every kind of merit, never entered a College in any country. They are all united in the ties of friendship, and seem to have only one heart and one soul, and that totally directed to raise the College to eminence, and thereby promote the common cause of religion. I can't help adding that Mr. Coombes[1] is transported with joy at the establishment being opened with so promising a prospect of success."

Immediately after his instalment, Dr. Stapleton

[1] Rev. W. H. Coombes, the Professor of Theology.

BISHOP STAPLETON.

From a silhouette at St. Edmund's College.

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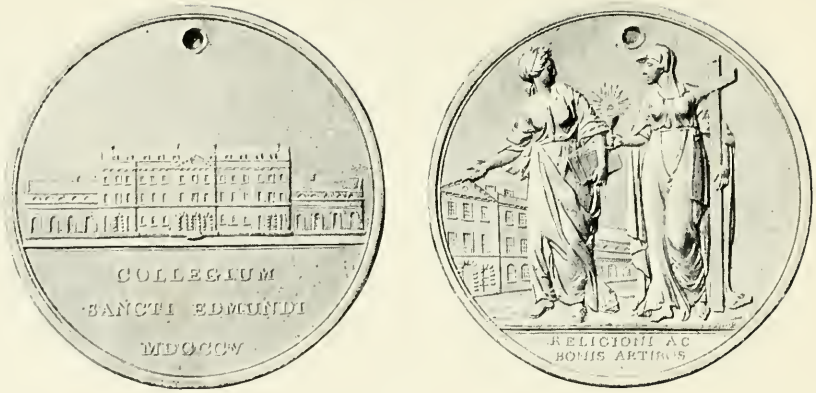
set to work, in conjunction with Dr. Douglass, to build the "new College," as it was then called. The necessary funds were supplied for the most part by a large legacy from a Mr. Sone, of Bedhampton, near Havant. The building was begun in 1795, but owing to certain delays was not opened until 1799. In 1805 the Chapel was added—now known as the "Old Chapel"—and in the same year the College medal was struck, showing the building as it was at that date. Though architecturally plain, the College was spacious and convenient inside, and the Ambulacrum built at that time remains to this day a feature. The interior of the Chapel was designed in close imitation of that at Douay, and was entirely French in all its appointments—altar furniture, vestments, ornaments, ceremonies, &c. The functions were carried out on a scale which, for England in those days, was considered very complete, and it is worthy of remark that the Gregorian chant was systematically taught, the books for the purpose having been brought from Rome by Dr. Stapleton.[1]

[1] They were of the Venetian edition, which is still largely used in Italy. The Mechlin chant books were not brought out till many years later than this, and have never been in use at the College. For some considerable time in obedience to decrees Ratisbon chant held the field, but during the last year the Solesmes has been introduced.

At the back of the main building, separated by a garden which is still called by the quaint name of "pleasure grounds," stood the building known as the "Old College," then used as a preparatory school; this is still standing to-day, and has not been much changed in appearance. The oldest part—the original "Old Hall" from which the place takes its name—dates back to about 1640; the north and south additions were built by Bishop Talbot. It is full of Catholic reminiscences, and the private chapel in the loft, where Dr. Challoner and Dr. Talbot must have said mass, can still be seen, though of course not now used as a chapel. The last act of real persecution in England was the "search" for Bishop Talbot in 1775, in order to prosecute him for keeping a Catholic school at Old Hall.

The chapel, however, which adjoined the "Old College" in 1805, serving the double needs of the people of the parish and the boys of the Preparatory School, does not now exist; it was pulled down in 1818, when the present "Parish Church" was built, having existed for twenty-six years. In this brief time many interesting associations gathered around it, for it was in that chapel that the Douay collegians gradually re-assembled as they escaped from the French



MEDAL OF ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE.

(Struck in 1805.)

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prisons, and where they sang votive masses for those of their comrades who were less fortunate than themselves. After the general release of the collegians, this chapel served temporarily for the students of St. Edmund's during the building of the new College.

The date of Dr. Stapleton's visit to Rome, to which allusion has been made, was 1800. It was connected with the marriage of the Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV) and Mrs. Fitzherbert; but an indirect consequence was his appointment as Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District. He was consecrated at St. Edmund's on March 8, 1801, this being, I believe, the first consecration of a Bishop in England with the full rites of the Roman Pontifical.[1] He did not long survive his consecration, dying on a visit to St. Omer, with a view to reclaiming the College, the following year.

His successor as President was Dr. Poynter. The new Vice-President was Dr. Coombes, also formerly a Professor at Douay and a man of considerable literary taste and ability, who had

[1] Permission had been granted in England to dispense with the two assisting Bishops, and this was the first time that the full number of three Bishops had been obtained. The consecrator was Dr. Douglass; the assisting Bishops Dr. Moylan of Cork, and Dr. Sharrock, Vicar Apostolic of the Western District.

taught theology at Old Hall since the very beginning in 1793. The Procurator was Rev. Francis Tuite, again a Douay man, who was destined afterwards to play an important part in Catholic affairs, for he was elected Coadjutor to Rev. John Daniel, the President of Douay, with the right of succession, so as to be able to claim the funds in case of his death. After being for several years Vice-President of St. Edmund's, he left in 1810, and later on was Vicar General of the London District. After Rev. John Daniel's death, he had to wind up the affairs of Douay College, of which he was the last to hold the title of President. His tomb at St. Edmund's has therefore a special interest for us.

The students in 1805 numbered something over one hundred, and include interesting names, both lay and clerical. Two future Bishops of the London District were there about that time, one of whom, Bishop Walsh, nearly half a century later, was nominated first Archbishop of Westminster; but there was a delay due to the Revolution in Rome in 1848, and in the interval he died, so that he was never installed, and his Coadjutor, Bishop Wiseman, was elected in his place. The other Bishop was Dr. Griffiths, who was President of the College for sixteen years and Vicar Apostolic of the London

District for ten. He died in 1847. Two other notable ecclesiastics may be mentioned—although they came to St. Edmund's several years later, Mark Tierney, the historian, the learned editor of Dodd's *Church History;* and Daniel Rock, the distinguished archæologist.

Among the lay students of this period we find Henry Howard, afterwards thirteenth Duke of Norfolk, grandfather to the present Duke, and John Talbot, afterwards known as the saintly Earl of Shrewsbury, the friend of Pugin, and the munificent benefactor of the Church. We may also note the name of William Shee, who, thirty years after the passing of the Emancipation Act, became a Judge of the High Court—the first Catholic to hold such a position since the Reformation. Many other names of the old Catholic families are also found at that time—Stonor, Arundel of Wardour, Fitzherbert Brockholes, Jerningham, Dormer, Tichborne, Blount, Walmesley, Ffrench, Mostyn, Petre, &c. It was of no little assistance to Dr. Poynter in his dealings with the Catholic aristocracy as bishop that he had so many members of their families under his charge at St. Edmund's; and it is remarkable what respect and veneration for him is shown in the letters of the parents, and of those who had themselves previously been under his care.

VII

LONDON CHAPELS IN 1805

The Embassy Chapels

RETURNING to London, we proceed to inquire as to the churches and services; and then, as now, we should turn to the *Catholic Directory* for information. The *Directory* began to be published after the middle of the eighteenth century, the early issues being, however, nothing more than an *Ordo*, or calendar, for the use of priests reciting office, with a few advertisements at the end. After the Act of 1791, legalizing Catholic chapels, a list of such chapels was added, with the names of the "chaplains" (as they were still called) and the hours of the services. A year or two later, when the colleges and convents which had been shut up in France and elsewhere on account of the Revolution had reopened in England, a list of them was given, with particulars of their course of education and terms; there was also an obituary list for the past year, in

which the names of the clergy were inserted free, and those of laymen on payment of a small fee for each. In addition to all this there were usually a biography and portrait of some Catholic of note, and additional articles on topics of general Catholic interest. Thus, for example, the *Directory* for 1805 contains a memoir of Bishop Bonaventure Giffard, with a portrait, and an article on the State of Religion in China.

For a long time the only title given to the book was the *Ordo*. There was, however, also a *Laity's Directory* in which the calendar was given in English; but in other respects this book was identical with the *Ordo*.[1]

The list of chapels given included not only London, but also the other towns of the home counties[2] wherever there was a public chapel;

[1] The *Catholic Directory*, in its present form, dates from the year 1838.

[2] It may be of interest to give the list. It will be seen that the furthest point to the north is Lichfield, the furthest to the west Salisbury, and all except these two were in the London District; but there seems to be no order, geographical or otherwise, in the list.

1. Brompton and Chatham.
2. Salisbury—Chapel House, Brown Street.
3. Margate—St. Austin's.
4. Lichfield—Boar Street.
5. Stratford—Ham Lane.

but omitted all mention of the country seats of the aristocracy. In London in 1805 we find eleven chapels mentioned,[1] of which four were or had been Embassy Chapels, and two were French. A few words on each will be in place.

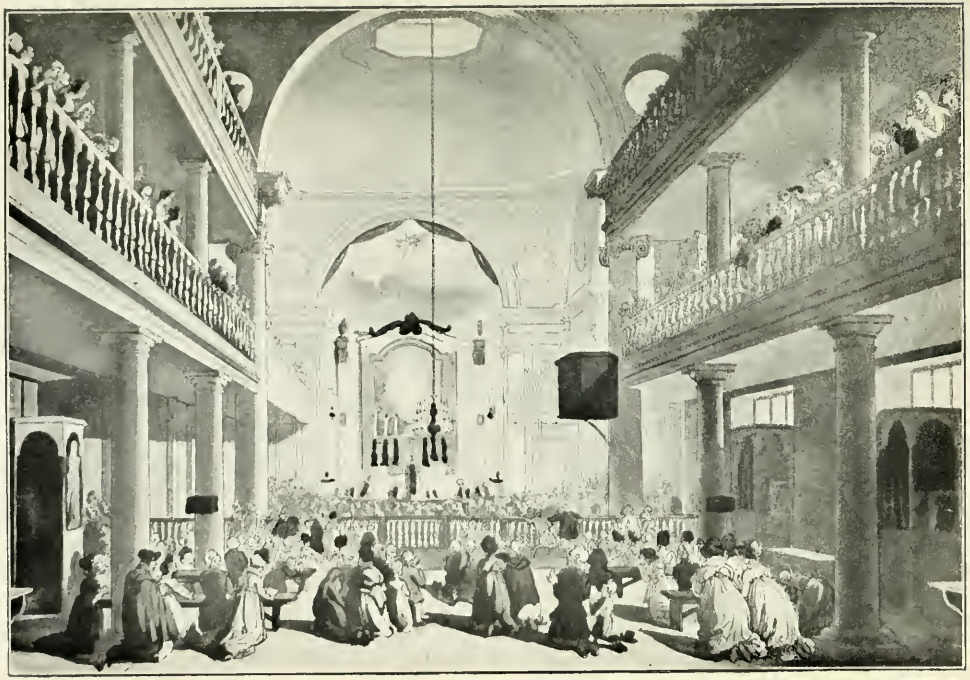
Sardinian Chapel, Lincoln's Inn Fields.[2]

The oldest of the Embassy Chapels was the Sardinian in Duke Street (now Sardinia Street),

6. Brighton—35, North Street.
7. Rotherhithe—Salisbury Lane.
8. Greenwich—Clark's Buildings.
9. Carshalton, near Croydon—Bernheim House.
10. Richmond—The Vineyard.
11. Isleworth—Shrewsbury Place.
12. Chertsey—Woburn Lower Lodge.
13. Windsor—Frogmore Lane.
14. Winchester—St. Peter's Street.
15. Gosport—Middle Street.
16. Cowes.
17. Newport.
18. Hammersmith—King Street.
19. „ Brook Green House.
20. Tottenham—Queen Street.

[1] These were the Sardinian Chapel, Lincoln's Inn Fields; the Bavarian Chapel, Warwick Street; the Spanish Chapel, Manchester Square; the Portuguese Chapel, South Audley Street; the French Chapels, Portman Square and Fitzroy Square; White Street, Moorfields; Virginia Street, Ratcliff Highway; London Road, St. George's Fields; Great Smith Street, Westminster; and St. Patrick's, Soho Square.

[2] An interesting little history of this mission, by Miss Harting, has recently been published by the parochial



SARDINIAN CHAPEL, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, IN 1808.

(From Ackerman's "Microcosm.")

Lincoln's Inn Fields. It is still standing to-day almost as it was in 1805, and it is now by far the oldest Catholic church in London. The modern *Catholic Directory* gives the date of the foundation as 1648, which is perhaps copied from that inscribed on the arch adjacent to the church, under which Sardinia Street passes, leading into Lincoln's Inn Fields; and there is evidence of mass being said about that time in one of the neighbouring houses. In the reign of James II the Franciscans took the house which is now the Presbytery; but they soon had to leave, and during the Revolution it was attacked by rioters, who signalized the overthrow of "Popery" by taking out all such things as vestments, books, and altar furniture, which they piled up in "the Fields" and made into a large bonfire. They also completely wrecked the house and chapel.

We have unfortunately no record of the house after this for over thirty years; we next find it in the occupation of the Sardinian ambassador which would have been about the year 1720. The chapel was then only half the size that it is now, and as it stood, it almost formed part of

clergy, to which, as well as to *Catholic London Missions* by the same authoress, the reader is referred for further information.

the house, though the public were allowed in through a separate entrance, which can still be seen. From that time we have a continuous history of the mission. The existing registers of baptisms, &c., begin in 1729.

In the year 1759 a fire broke out, which practically destroyed the interior of both house and chapel. The large and valuable picture behind the altar was rescued, but little else survived, and the damage was so great that three years elapsed before it was repaired, during which time mass was said in a room in Holborn. The chapel was reopened about the year 1762. The well-known engraving of Dr. Challoner[1] having been executed after that date, shows the altar as it is at the present day.

We now go forward eighteen years to the great landmark of London Catholicity of the eighteenth century—the Gordon Riots. In these it was only to be expected that the Sardinian Chapel would suffer more than any other, for the double reason that its position was central and that it was far the best known Catholic church in London at that date.

[1] See p. 4. The large metal mitre represented in the picture is now at Archbishop's House. It is much less cumbersome to wear than might be expected from its appearance.

SARDINIAN CHAPEL, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

(Modern).

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Accordingly we find that the rioters gave it their special attention. They broke into the church, and taking out all the fittings that were combustible—benches, sanctuary rails, pulpit, &c.—made a pile outside the doors in Duke Street and set fire to it; the valuable picture behind the high altar was burnt with the rest. The fire soon also caught the doors of the chapel, and the whole interior was quickly in a blaze. For a long time the mob reigned supreme, and the fire went on burning. Eventually the guards arrived, and the riot was quelled, and the fire was put out by the engines. Two days later the rioters returned, determined to pull down the church; but this time the soldiers kept order, and no further mischief was done. The Catholics were afterwards compensated for the damage to their property, and the interior of the church was repaired and redecorated, and was reopened for public worship. A copy of the former picture was put up behind the high altar, where it can still be seen.

In the year 1798 the house and property were sold, and the church was closed. The whole, however, was bought by a Catholic, Mr. Maire, of Lartington, Northumberland, who in turn handed it back to Bishop Douglass; and he, realizing that it had become by that time practically

an important mission, determined to make an effort to reopen the chapel. Accordingly we find the following entries in his diary :—

"1799. January 2. The Chaplains of Lincoln's Inn call upon me. We considered upon and determined that the Ambassador should be written to, and requested to grant the Bishop and Chaplains leave to open the Chapel again, for that they knew the Congregation would support it by subscription and donations among themselves. A letter was accordingly delivered to Mr. Boswell, of the navy post office, to be forwarded to his Excellency at Bath.

"January 3. The Chaplains dined with me to-day and agreed on the ways and means of supporting the said Chapel."

When the communication was sent to the Sardinian Ambassador, it appeared that there was a lease with some years still to run, during which time he probably contemplated letting the house. An agreement was, however, come to by which Dr. Douglass took over the remainder of the lease, and the Ambassador's house in Lincoln's Inn Fields was converted into a clergy house, which purpose it has served ever since. It was arranged that the connection with the Sardinian Embassy should not be entirely broken off. The Royal Arms were still retained wherever

SARDINIAN CHAPEL, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

(Modern).

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they had previously been, and prayers for the King of Sardinia were said on Sundays as formerly. The whole fabric was overhauled and repaired,[1] and the solemn reopening took place on August 13, 1799, Dr. Douglass singing mass and the Rev. James Archer preaching. In the *Directory* of the following year the announcement is made that "The Sardinian Chapel, Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, is now supported by subscription, but the body of the chapel is left free for non-subscribers."

It seems to have been at the time that the chapel was restored after the Gordon Riots that it was doubled in size, and assumed roughly its present shape. The part added is said to have been on the site formerly occupied by the Ambassador's stables. The organ was in the gallery, at the back of the added part. The appearance of the church at that time has been perpetuated by a print published in 1808, which is here reproduced; it forms a most interesting record

[1] During these operations an interesting discovery was made, which Dr. Douglass records in the following words: "The altar stone at Lincoln's Inn is that which was on the altar of the B.V.M. at Glastonbury. Granite surrounded with reliques and a parchment scroll under the stone announces the above mystery." The parchment appears to have been forgotten again in the course of years, but was rediscovered in 1904.

of the appearance of a Catholic chapel in those days.[1]

The changes in the church during the last hundred years have been comparatively slight. The Rev. William O'Connor, who was rector for over thirty years, renewed the decorations about 1851, and also purchased a new organ, placing it in an upper gallery. At the same time he filled the free space at the back of the church with benches, and there are now two side altars under the galleries. Nevertheless, the general appearance of the interior does not seem to have changed much, and still carries the mind back to a century ago. The two sanctuary lamps are those which were made in wood, after the Gordon Riots ; they are facsimiles of the silver originals which had been destroyed, and were intended to be used only till such time as these could be replaced. The tabernacle on the high altar is also a relic of the past, for it was made at the same time, and was fitted with an opening at the back, so that in the event of any further outrages the Blessed Sacrament could be easily rescued and taken into the house. We can likewise still see the arms of the King of Sardinia over the organ, and the place formerly reserved for the Am-

[1] For an explanation of the general arrangement of the seats, &c., at that date, see p. 144.

bassador and his friends in the gallery; and the set of vestments given by the King of Sardinia in 1782 continue to be used at high mass on great feasts.[1]

The church is, alas! doomed shortly to be destroyed, for the site is required by the London County Council for one of their new thoroughfares. We cannot, of course, reasonably expect them to change their plans out of mere sentiment; but we shall feel when it goes that one of the most prominent landmarks of Catholic London of a century ago will have disappeared.

Bavarian Chapel, Warwick Street.

After Lincoln's Inn, the next church in point of age now standing is the old "Bavarian Chapel" in Warwick Street. The registers of the mission go back to 1747; but of the original chapel we know very little, for it was completely destroyed during the Gordon Riots. It was built about 1730, being originally the chapel of the Portuguese Ambassador, who lived in Golden Square, and the arms of the King of Portugal remained on the ceiling until its destruction by the rioters. Long before that time, however, the

[1] The custom of special prayers for the King of Sardinia was discontinued on the invasion of the Papal States in 1860.

Portuguese Embassy had been removed to South Audley Street,[1] and the house in Golden Square was occupied by the Bavarian Ambassador. Behind the house was a garden, at the other end of which were situated the Ambassador's stables, which fronted on Warwick Street. The chapel opened out of the stable yard, and was approached from Warwick Street by a narrow passage.

After the riots, owing, no doubt, to the state of public feeling, some years passed away before any steps were taken to repair the damage; but eventually a new chapel was built on what was then considered a large scale, and opened about 1788. This is the church we now know, and the outside is much the same to-day as it was a century ago, except for the large cross over the gable, which must have been added since. The whole building forms a remarkable relic of Catholic London of those days, being quite typical of the ugly square style in which churches were then commonly built.

The interior, however, has been considerably altered by the addition of a new sanctuary some

[1] I cannot find the exact date when the Portuguese Embassy was removed. It was still in Golden Square in 1736, but was already in South Audley Street in 1749. Possibly the date of the beginning of the register (1747) marks the time when it became the Bavarian Chapel.

BAVARIAN CHAPEL, WARWICK STREET.

(Modern.)

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thirty years ago, when Mgr. Talbot was rector, and needless to say, the large statue of our Lady which is now such a centre of devotion had no existence. The carving of the Assumption, now over the sacristy door, and known as the "old altar-piece," was likewise of a considerably later date. Moreover, the galleries had been much curtailed, and the old pew-like benches had given place to new open ones about the middle of last century. It will be readily understood how all these changes added together alter the appearance of the chapel.

Although a century ago Warwick Street was always known as the Bavarian Chapel, and was in fact under the protection of the Bavarian Ambassador, it had ceased to be strictly speaking an embassy chapel. In the *Catholic Directory* it is classed with those supported by subscription, and in his report of his district sent to Rome in 1796, Bishop Douglass does not mention Warwick Street among the embassy chapels. This state of things probably dated from the building of the present chapel. There was, indeed, an endowment paid annually by the Bavarian Government, but this by no means covered the cost of maintaining the chapel, the responsibility for which fell then, as now, on the head priest, and ultimately on the Bishop. In

this connection it is interesting to learn from Dr. Douglass's Diary that when in 1800 the Elector of Bavaria reduced the amount allowed for the support of the chapel from £260 to £100 a year, the deficit was almost made up by raising the price of the seats; for the neighbourhood was fashionable, and the congregation included many who were rich and could afford to give. The modern methods of raising money by concerts, bazaars, and the like were then hardly known.

The allowance of the Ambassador was continued till 1871, when, owing to the unification of the German Empire, there ceased to be a Bavarian Ambassador in London, and the prayer for the King of Bavaria after mass on Sundays, which had continued till that date, gave place to that for Queen Victoria.

The head Chaplain in 1805 was Rev. James Archer, the celebrated preacher, of whom I shall be speaking presently. No account of Warwick Street Chapel, however, during the first part of the nineteenth century, however short, would be complete without a few words about two well-known priests who ministered there together for not far off half a century—Revv. William Wilds and John Jones. The former was already a junior Chaplain there in 1805, but the latter did not join him till 1808. Mr. Wilds was one

of the great links between the days of the Penal Laws and those of Wiseman and the Hierarchy. He had gone through his course at Douay, and was a priest and professor before the college came to an end in 1793. After going through the imprisonment with the others he continued his teaching at St. Edmund's College for some years, but then came to Warwick Street, where he lived on to see the old London district made into the dioceses of Westminster and Southwark. He died in 1852. Those who knew him spoke of his retiring manners and unassuming piety of the old type, and of the regularity with which for long years he went through his daily routine, with apparent indifference to the events of the outer world.

The Rev. John Jones was a much younger man, educated at Sedgley Park and St. Edmund's, and one of the first, if not the very first priest who was educated in England throughout his whole course. He was a prominent figure in London Catholic society, his eccentricities no doubt adding a charm of their own, for it is said that "his dignified form with his silver ear-trumpet was always an acceptable sight in London drawing-rooms." For a long time he drew no salary and lived in his own lodgings, and insisted on being called an "honorary chap-

lain." As a preacher he was well known and respected; it was said that he wrote well, and read well what he had written. He died suddenly on February 21, 1850, while on a visit to St. Leonard's-on-Sea.

Spanish Chapel.

Let us now go to the Spanish Chapel off Manchester Square, and this brings us across an ecclesiastic of unusual interest in Dr. Hussey, afterwards President of Maynooth, and Bishop of Waterford, who was the life and soul of the embassy for more than a generation. He came to London soon after his ordination, and was appointed a junior chaplain about the year 1767. The chapel at that date was within the Ambassador's residence.[1] Dr. Hussey became senior Chaplain in 1784, and by his exertions a new chapel was built, adjacent to the Ambassador's residence, which served for public worship from the year 1792 until the opening of the present church in 1890.

[1] I have not been able to find out for certain where the embassy was at this time. In 1736 it was in Ormond Street; in 1792 in Manchester Square; but in the years immediately preceding the latter date there was a chapel under the protection of the Spanish Ambassador in York Street, St. James's Square; and this was probably at that time in the Ambassador's house.

BISHOP HUSSEY.

From a painting by Gainsborough at Spanish Place.

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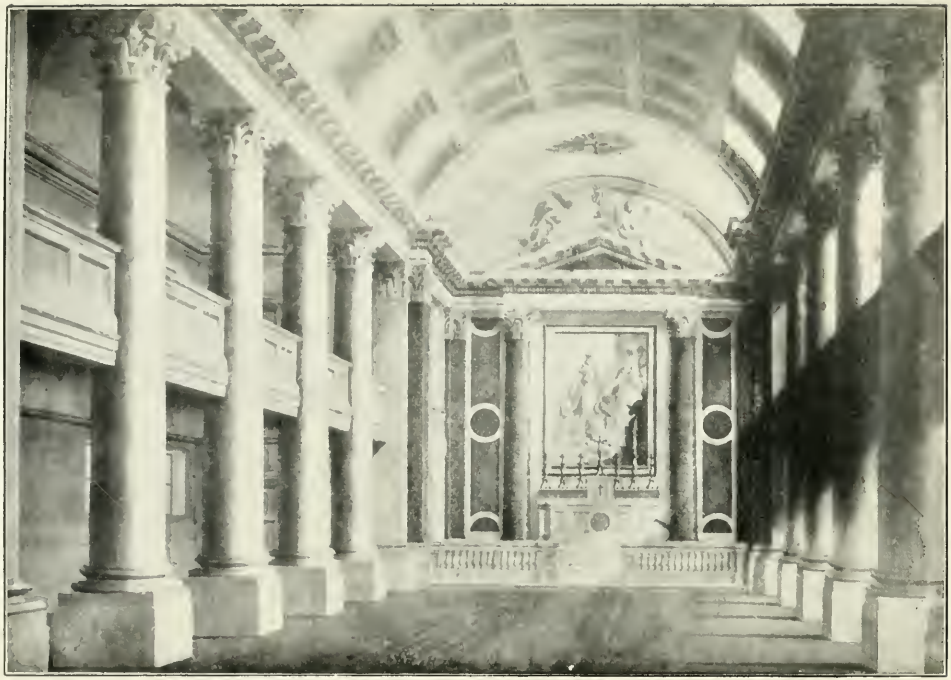
Dr. Hussey is described by Charles Butler as "a man of great genius, of enlightened piety, with manners at once imposing and elegant, and of enchanting conversation." He was a friend of Dr. Johnson, and is more than once mentioned by Boswell; while the fact that, although a Catholic priest, he was elected F.R.S. in 1792, shows that his learning and ability were well known and recognized outside the Catholic body. The British Government utilized his services once by sending him on a special diplomatic mission to Madrid, and he was commissioned to go to Rome on behalf of the Catholic Committee to lay their grievances against the Vicars Apostolic before Propaganda, and to petition for the restoration of the Hierarchy. He was throughout in sympathy with the Committee; but the projected journey to Rome never came off, as the Spanish Ambassador—the Marquis del Campo—interfered, not wishing to be implicated in the disputes, and refused to give his chaplain leave of absence.

Dr. Hussey went back to Ireland in 1794. The following year he became the first President of Maynooth, and shortly afterwards Bishop of Waterford. He did not stay in Ireland very long, however, and in 1797 we find him back in London, for he had retained his post as Spanish

chaplain. Moreover, he obtained leave from Rome to absent himself from his diocese, which he ruled by Vicars. Shortly afterwards he fell out with Bishop Douglass, by exercising powers which he considered himself to possess, by not only appointing a junior chaplain, but even granting him faculties for hearing Confessions. Dr. Douglass boldly suspended Bishop Hussey, who forthwith appealed to Rome, but, owing to the disturbed state of the Eternal City, the appeal was put off, and in the meantime the two Bishops came to terms. A little later the British Government took exception to Bishop Hussey's manner of acting, and "to the company he kept"; so at least says Dr. Douglass, who gives this as the reason why he left England for good in 1799. He returned to Waterford, and ended his life four years later under somewhat peculiar circumstances, for he had some kind of fit while bathing and was drowned at Tramore on July 11, 1803.

The picture of the interior of the Spanish Chapel here reproduced is taken from the drawings of the architect, Signor Bonomi,[1] and is dated 1792. The Spanish Embassy was then in Manchester Square, and the site for the new

[1] By a curious coincidence Mr. Goldie, the architect of the present church known as Spanish Place—which is, however, in George Street, though close to the Spanish



SPANISH CHAPEL.

chapel was adjacent to it, hence the name "Spanish Place." Those who remember the old chapel will not need to be told that the architect has idealized the proportions, and the actual effect produced was hardly comparable to that which the picture would seem to indicate. It must, however, be borne in mind that considerable changes were made about the middle of the century, when a new aisle was added on the Epistle side. This involved the demolition of the gallery on that side, and for the sake of uniformity that on the Gospel side was taken down at the same time, so that latterly there were no side galleries at all. Moreover, three new altars were added, dedicated to our Lady, St. James, and St. Vincent of Paul respectively. These were placed one at the end of each aisle, in a line with the high altar. This gave the church the curious unsymmetrical appearance that many of us remember, there being four compartments—the nave and three aisles—of almost equal size, with the high altar at the end of the second one. The tower was added, over the new aisle, in 1850, and the picture of the outside of the church must date from very soon

Place turning—is the grandson of the former architect. It is purely a coincidence, for Mr. Goldie was not chosen as architect on that account, but his design was accepted as the best in a competition for the work.

after that time. It had then ceased for nearly a quarter of a century to be an embassy chapel, and was supported in the ordinary way by the congregation.

Portuguese Chapel, South Street.

One more prominent embassy chapel remains to be mentioned—the Portuguese Chapel, which adjoined the Ambassador's house at the corner of South Audley Street and South Street, Grosvenor Square. It was closed about the year 1825, and nothing is now left of it. But in its day it was an important chapel, "which has long been remarkable" (says the *Catholic Miscellany*[1]) "for the solemnity with which the divine mysteries are offered up, for the excellence of the music employed in the sacred service, and for the great respectability of the congregation." The music was under the direction of Mr. Vincent Novello, the organist of the chapel and founder of the well-known musical firm, and attracted many Protestants to the services. Among them was the then Duke of Leeds, an accomplished musician, who, hearing the *Adeste Fideles* sung at Christmas, induced Novello to produce the now well-known four-part arrangement. This was brought out at one of the

[1] July, 1823, p. 318.

SPANISH CHAPEL.

"Antient Concerts," and the air at once became popular in Protestant churches, where it was known—from the place of its origin—as the "Portuguese Hymn." The actual source of the melody has so far eluded discovery.

There were other embassies belonging to Catholic Powers besides those mentioned, and the Ambassadors would have had chaplains to say mass which the neighbouring Catholics would have been allowed to attend; but there were no regular public chapels connected with them. The Neapolitan Embassy was at that time in Bond Street. There had formerly been a Neapolitan Chapel when the Ambassador lived in Tinley Street, Grosvenor Square, from 1766 to 1776. It was then moved to Bird Street; and in 1787 again migrated, this time to Seymour Mews, Portman Square. We next hear of it in the Bond Street Embassy in 1792; but the following year it was finally closed. The Neapolitan Ambassador seems to have helped somewhat in establishing a much-needed church in Westminster, which was served for a time by one of his chaplains. Of this I shall speak presently. Unfortunately it did not last long, and the Neapolitan Church itself was never reopened.

VIII

LONDON CHAPELS IN 1805 (*continued*)

Moorfields.

WE now proceed to the churches of 1805 which were not connected with any embassy, I propose to take them in order, by making a circuit round London in the direction taken by the hands of a clock. And we naturally commence with Moorfields, which has the closest connection with the history of London Catholicity.

It is very difficult to fix the date of the beginning of the mission. The original "mass-house" or "mass-houses"—for there appear at one time to have been two—was in Ropemakers' Alley, at the Corner of Butler's Alley and Grub Street, so that it is sometimes known by either name. The old Grub Street is now Milton Street, and Ropemakers' Alley has become Ropemakers' Street. We have very little information

as to what the chapel was like, but the statement made by Payne the "informer," at the trial of Bishop Talbot, that it would hold nearly a thousand people, must have been an absurd exaggeration.

At this chapel the Rev. Richard Dillon was the priest from 1749 to 1780, when it was completely destroyed by the Gordon rioters. The Rev. Richard Dillon died soon afterwards, and it is believed that his death was accelerated by the hardships and anxieties he went through at that time.

After the riots were over, the Catholics were compensated for the damage done to their property, and they bought a house in White Street, and fitted up a small chapel there. This was the Moorfields Chapel which was in use in 1805. It served its purpose until the opening of the church known as St. Mary's, Moorfields, in 1820. The house in White Street was left standing until about 1875; but unfortunately no picture of the chapel is extant. We know that it was small and very plain, and that it was one of the last of the London chapels to have high mass, which was introduced there in 1805.

In the meantime the district was growing in size and importance. There were reported to be six thousand Catholics, to minister to whom there

were four priests. Moreover, Finsbury Circus and the streets around were becoming a residential centre for London merchants and others, so that it is not surprising to find the priest of the day, Rev. Joseph Hunt, calling in the year 1816 for an effort to build a new church. The call was responded to, and the well-known church was built. After being solemnly opened in 1820, it served the needs of the Catholics in that district for several generations: but towards the end of the nineteenth century the city merchants had all migrated out of town, their former houses were turned into offices, and the congregation at St. Mary's had dwindled. The inevitable result followed. In 1899 the church was sold, and the small, unpretending chapel in Eldon Street was opened in its stead.

Virginia Street.

Proceeding eastwards, we come next to the well-known Virginia Street Chapel, off the old Ratcliff Highway, which had a large congregation, chiefly of the poorer classes—dock labourers and the like—a large proportion of them being Irish. The mission was not indeed as old as Moorfields, but the congregation at the beginning of the nineteenth century was about as numerous,

though much poorer. The following curious story about the foundation of the chapel is from the *Catholic Miscellany* for April, 1823, over the initials W.Y. :—

"Strange as it may appear," he writes, "the chapel in Virginia Street owes its origin in a great measure to the project of a Portuguese Jew named Emanuel; this man represented himself to doctor Challoner as a Catholic priest, and by means of papers which he had surreptitiously obtained, passed for a considerable time unsuspected; through his exertions the chapel was erected and placed under the protection of the King of Portugal, whose arms were fixed over the principal entrance, and it assumed the name of the Portuguese hospital. Emanuel was afterwards discovered to be an impostor, he was consequently driven from the chapel, and some years after died in the poorhouse of Whitechapel, in a state of wretchedness and abject poverty."

The above story is given for what it may be worth. The owner of the copy of the *Catholic Miscellany* before me writes a marginal note, "I have heard his mass," so that he at least believed the story. At any rate, the Virginia Street Chapel was well known in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and some of the last

prosecutions of priests for saying mass were connected with it—notably the indictment of Rev. Mr. Webb by the informer Payne, on which occasion Lord Mansfield gave his well-known instruction to the jury to acquit him, as although it had been shown that he attempted to say mass, it had not been proved that he was a priest. This was in the year 1762.

Eighteen years after this was the date of the Gordon Riots, in which Virginia Street suffered more than almost any other church. The head priest, Rev. Michael Coen, affirmed that "had he judged proper, he could have assembled within the space of one half hour three thousand men from among the ballast-getters, the coal heavers, the lumpers, &c., &c., and by their assistance have protected his chapel"; but the clergy had received an official communication from the Home Office "requesting them to use their influence in preventing the Irish, who inhabited the waterside, from opposing the rioters when they should attack the chapel." No doubt the Government were afraid that a free fight between the parties in the East-end might make the riots even more serious. Mr. Coen obeyed orders, and the chapel was utterly destroyed. When the compensation money was paid he set about rebuilding it. Again, however, I am unable to say

what the chapel was like. It is described simply as poor and unpretending. The congregation was growing, and in 1805 numbered about seven or eight thousand, who had only three priests to minister to their spiritual needs.

The mission was conducted, as was usual at that time, by a Committee of laymen. The following incident, recorded by Dr. Douglass, is an example of the difficulties to which that arrangement was apt to lead :—

" 1808, August. Much disturbance at Virginia Street Chapel, between the Committee and Chaplains of the said Chapel, concerning the alterations of the Chapel and the music introduced into the choir. The same being inflamed and at last breaking into an absolute fall out, Chaplains against Committee, I assisted at the Committee held on 25th inst., and reconciled both parties. Those who had used intemperate language at former meetings arose and begged pardon publicly for the same and for the offence they had given. Peace and harmony were restored. May discord never enter more among them ! Mr. Berger, a German, having acquired a large fortune by success in business, made a present of more than twelve hundred pounds to Virginia Street in gratitude to Almighty God for granting him that success, and by this money the

alterations in the Chapel were made and an organ and High Mass were introduced."

The congregation continued to increase, and about the middle of the century the people had become so numerous that the chapel was considered inadequate, and in 1853–6 Wardell's beautiful Gothic church in Commercial Road was built to replace it. Virginia Street is now so far away in the past that its very name is hardly remembered.

St. George's Fields.

We now cross the Thames by London Bridge, and find ourselves in Southwark. There was only one mission in South London in 1805, that in London Road, St. George's Fields, which has since developed into the headquarters of the Diocese of Southwark. The mission was first begun in 1788, in the room of a house in an alley close to the Borough, known by the curious name of Bandyleg Walk, where Little Guilford Street now is; this was commonly known as the Borough Chapel. The first permanent church was built in the London Road five years later, in the year 1793. The opening took place on the Feast of St. Patrick, which that year fell on Passion Sunday. Dr. Douglass sang

CLERGY HOUSE AND CHAPEL, LONDON ROAD, ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS.

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mass, and the sermon was preached by the well-known Father O'Leary, of whom I shall speak presently.

The buildings put up included a priest's house and a fair-sized chapel. The architect was Mr. James Taylor, the same man who designed both Old Hall and Ushaw Colleges. We can see in the pictures of it here reproduced a touch of incipient Gothic, of a style not unlike that of Dr. Milner's church at Winchester ; but its general appearance and arrangement, with galleries and pew-like benches, and the style and character of the altar decorations are quite in keeping with the churches of the period.

South London was, of course, only a fraction then of what it is now, and the rural look of the priest's house strikes us as a little strange. Nevertheless, the work of the mission was very hard, and apparently of much the same character as it is to-day. The congregation included many of the roughest classes. The following incident told by Dr. Douglass gives us a little insight into the sort of treatment that Catholics were still exposed to. The date is June, 1800.

" In the chapel of St. George's Fields, a noise or species of a riot happened last Sunday, Whitsunday, afternoon. Three fellows went into the Chapel during the singing of the psalms at

Vespers, and were observed to be looking all about with more than common curiosity. At length one of the three went into one of the Confessionals and drew the curtain before him. On being asked what he was doing there, and being drawn out by one of the congregation, he used improper language; then asked what they were singing, what language, if French, if Italian? When told it was Latin, he said to the man, the collector at the door, 'Do you understand Latin?' Some more words of abuse and a scuffle ensued, on which some Irishmen in the Chapel came to the assistance of the Collector, and the fellow was driven out, but not without receiving some bruises from him. He was afterwards given in charge of a constable, who let him go. The three fellows were, it is said, Presbyterians."

The following appeal, which appeared for a long time annually in the *Catholic Directory*, enables us to form an idea of the work that there was to be done there, and the necessities of the mission :—

"CHAPEL, LONDON ROAD, ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS.

. . . The poverty of this part of the London District does not afford sufficient maintenance for

LONDON ROAD CHAPEL, ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS.

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the clergy requisite to perform the heavy duties of this chapel. There are four prisons, two large hospitals, and several workhouses to be attended, and more than four thousand, chiefly poor, who look to their pastors not only for spiritual, but pecuniary assistance; besides which, a large debt on the building is to be paid. This place in a PARTICULAR MANNER claims public attention and benevolent assistance. There are also schools for boys and girls of indigent parents, kept separate, for which there is a feast annually in May, and a subscription collected."

In order to do all this work there were only three chaplains, and probably the mission would not have been able to support more. At the period we are concerned with, that is about the year 1805, Rev. John Griffiths, who had built the church, was still head priest. The Rev. Joseph Hodgson, the last Vice-President of Douay, had recently left to become Vicar General of the London District, and had been succeeded by Dr. Bramston, who was one of the best-known priests of the eighteenth century, and one of whom many interesting stories are told. He became a convert in middle life—being nearly forty years old when he was received—and had been educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, after which he practised for some years as a solicitor. After his

conversion he spent eight years at the English College at Lisbon, where he was ordained priest. Returning to London in 1801, he went straight to St. George's Fields, where he remained for over twenty years. In 1813 he became Dr. Poynter's Vicar General, but did not leave St. George's Fields till he was consecrated Bishop Coadjutor in 1823. He was thus a prominent figure in Catholic London a century ago, with his large, portly frame and his face brimming over with humour. We can almost hear him giving out his favourite and oft-quoted joke: "A Popish priest, sir, am I, and grafted on a Protestant lawyer; so I should be a match in cunning for the devil himself." Later on he became Bishop of the London District, and it has often surprised me that when Cardinal Manning first became Archbishop, so much was made of his being a convert and a University man, as though such a thing had never been known before, when, only thirty years earlier, Dr. Bramston had held the corresponding position, with, in those respects, similar antecedents.

The Rev. Thomas Doyle came in 1820 as assistant priest; and in 1829 he succeeded as head priest. The work he did later, in conjunction with Pugin, to build the present St. George's is too well known to need any words here. Pugin's

BISHOP BRAMSTON.

From a picture by Ramsay, at St. Edmund's College.

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church was opened in 1848, when the old one, after serving for fifty-six years, ceased to be used. The large picture of the crucifixion which formed the altar-piece of the chapel in London Road now hangs in the sacristy of St. George's. The old church was afterwards converted into a Benedictine Convent, but was finally destroyed by fire, so that nothing whatever is left of it at the present day. Its site is occupied by the South London Music Hall.

Westminster.

We now cross the Thames again, this time by Westminster Bridge, and find ourselves in a large and thickly populated neighbourhood, which for many years had no permanent chapel, though several attempts were made to provide one. In 1792 a chapel was opened in York Street, Queen Square, which lasted seven years, and was closed in 1799. In 1803 a new attempt was made in a house in Great Smith Street, which was served by the chaplains of the Neapolitan Embassy, and this chapel appears in the *Catholic Directory* for 1805. Apparently this attempt was less successful than the last, for in 1806, after a brief existence of three years, the chapel was closed. A further attempt was made a little later in

Dartmouth Street ; and finally funds were collected and a permanent church built in Romney Terrace, at the back of Horseferry Road. This was opened in 1813, and remained in use, though with considerable additions and alterations, until the opening of the Westminster Cathedral in 1903.

St. Patrick's, Soho.

If we now proceed from Westminster to the West-end of London, we find ourselves in the neighbourhood of the embassy chapels. We can first pass by the Portuguese Chapel in South Street, next visit the Spanish Chapel near Manchester Square, and then proceed to the Bavarian Chapel at Warwick Street. From thence we can complete our circuit by going direct to the Sardinian Chapel at Lincoln's Inn Fields ; but it will be worth while on leaving Warwick Street to divert our steps a little to the north, in order to visit the well-known church of St. Patrick, Soho. This was the regular centre for the Irish in London, and the Feast of St. Patrick was always observed there with very great solemnity. Needless to say, the Irish formed a far less important element in London Catholicity in 1805 than they do to-day, for the great immigration had not yet taken place ; but they already numbered several thousands, mostly belonging to the very

ST. PATRICK'S, SOHO—OLD CHAPEL.

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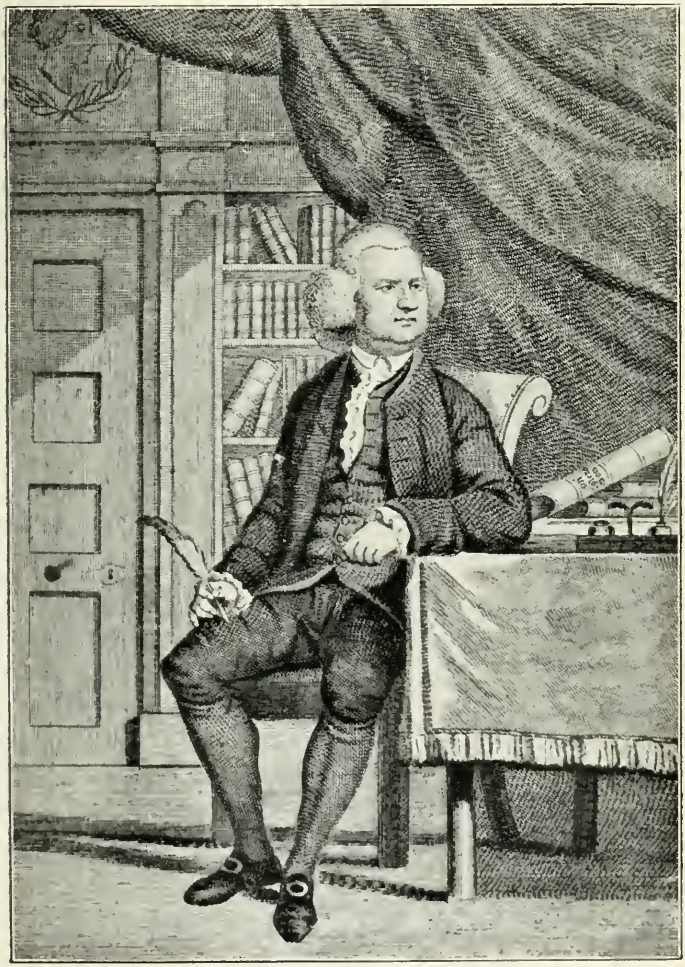
poorest classes. Many of these lived in the side streets and slums which abounded in the parish of St. Giles's and the neighbourhood of old Seven Dials. But the congregation at St. Patrick's was by no means exclusively poor. There were houses in the district which belonged to well-to-do people; and, indeed, the centre of fashionable London in those days was not far off.

The church of Soho owed its existence to an association of laymen formed towards the end of 1791 or the beginning of 1792, under the title of the Confraternity of St. Patrick. The avowed object of the Association was "to consider of the most effectual means of establishing a chapel to be called St. Patrick's, on a liberal and permanent foundation." The prime movers in the matter were a Mr. Olivier and Mr. George Keating, the son of the Catholic publisher, at whose house the celebrated Irish priest, Father O'Leary, resided. The latter threw himself into the project. There was a large entertainment hall belonging to Carlisle House, formerly the property of the notorious Mrs. Cornelys, and a plan was formed of renting this[1] and converting it into a church. With the

[1] The hall was bought by Father Barge in 1865, when the lease fell in, together with the adjoining house in Soho Square, and the present church and presbytery, which were built by Canon Vere on the same site, are the freehold property of the diocese.

approval of Bishop Douglass, Father O'Leary issued an appeal to the Catholic public, which was responded to sufficiently well to effect the requisite alterations without delay. No change was made in the outside, which remained entirely unecclesiastical in appearance, but within, the hall was fitted up in the usual style of chapels of that day. There were originally two large rooms, one over the other. These were adapted by breaking through the floor in the middle, thus making them into one large room ; but round the sides the floor was allowed to remain, and in this manner the galleries were formed. The chapel was solemnly opened on September 29, 1792, when Dr. Douglass sang the mass and Father O'Leary preached the sermon. For some years after the foundation of the mission a Committee of laymen undertook the responsibility of financing, and to some extent managing, the chapel ; but this only lasted about twenty years, and in 1813 they were only too pleased to give up their responsibilities and hand the church over bodily to the Bishop.

It will be seen that Father O'Leary took a chief part in the foundation of the mission. He was a well-known figure in London life during the last decade of the eighteenth century, and a few words about him will be in place. He was a



REV. ARTHUR O'LEARY.

From an old print at St. Patrick's, Soho.

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Franciscan Friar, and spent the best years of his life in Ireland, helping the British Government in their attempts to maintain order, by the influence he acquired over the Irish peasantry, in reward for which the Government granted him a pension. The reasons which induced him to leave Ireland have been variously given. The following account is from the funeral sermon preached by his friend Rev. Morgan D'Arcy. He says: "Such was his disinterestedness and the noble independence of his spirit, that when soon after a very considerable annuity had been offered him to become the supporter of a periodical publication which then was, and still continues to be, the foul vehicle of misrepresentation, slander, and calumny on the Irish people, indignant at the insulting proposal, he rejects it with becoming contempt, though by his refusal he was sure to incur the displeasure of a certain description of men, and through their influence might apprehend a discontinuance of his pension. Yet destitute as he was of all earthly property beside, and to use the emphatic words of his honourable and eloquent friend, Mr. Grattan, poor in everything but genius and philosophy, sooner than prostitute his heaven-sent talents, he leaves his native country and repairs to this Metropolis to enjoy the boasted

and enviable blessings of British protection and British liberty."[1]

On his arrival in London, Father O'Leary acted for a while as assistant priest to Dr. Hussey at Spanish Place; but after a time these two fell out and Father O'Leary withdrew, and shortly after this he undertook the care of St. Patrick's. He seems to have been as successful in gaining an ascendency over the Irish in London as he had been in Ireland, and he did a great and lasting work among the poor in the neighbourhood of St. Giles's. Charles Butler has given us a personal description of him. He says: "[His] appearance was simple. In his countenance there was a mixture of goodness, solemnity, and drollery which fixed every eye that beheld it. No one was more generally loved and revered; no one less assuming or more pleasing in his manner."[2]

In his public action, though a strong patriot, Father O'Leary was always loyal to Mr. Pitt's party, and spoke in favour of the Union of the Irish Parliament with the Imperial, believing Pitt's promise, that as a result the repeal of the Penal Laws and Catholic Emancipation would follow. As soon, however, as the Cabinet decided to put this in the forefront of its programme, the

[1] *Funeral Sermon*, p. 20. [2] *Hist. Memoirs*, ii. p. 24.

King put forward the extraordinary plea that the granting of it would be against his coronation oath, and the Ministry accordingly resigned, "because," says Dr. Douglass, "having pledged themselves to grant or bring about the Emancipation of the Irish Catholics, *scilicet* at the time they were effecting the union of the two kingdoms, they could not be induced to remain in places which could be no longer held with honour, . . . and have pledged themselves to each other not to accept any place till emancipation has been granted." Commenting on the King's plea as to the Coronation Oath, Dr. Douglass adds, "How unfounded is this scruple! The newspapers, the general voice of the nation, declare this scruple to be unfounded!"

Father O'Leary continued his work at Soho for some ten years, till he wore himself out by his labours. He died in 1802, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Pancras. The chapel continued in use for close upon a century, till it was pulled down to make room for the new church opened in 1893. A mural monument in memory of Father O'Leary, which was erected soon after his death, is now in the new church; and his body has been removed from its former resting-place and taken to St. Mary's Cemetery, Kensal Green.

St. Patrick's has been the scene of many interesting events. The sight of hundreds of French clergy assembled there listening to Père Beauregard's retreat in 1792, has already been alluded to, as also the public Requiem in 1804 for the Duc d'Enghien, at which the French clergy and laity attended. Another interesting occasion was the official Requiem for the repose of the soul of Pope Pius VI, which took place there in 1799. Dr. Douglass gives a full account of it in his diary, which is interesting as giving us a little insight into the scale at which they aimed in those days on a very special occasion. The function was carried out regardless of expense, being arranged by Mgr. Erskine, who was a kind of informal Papal Legate in England at that time. He was of Scotch descent on his father's side, with an Italian mother ; in subdeacon's orders only, but a Canon of St. Peter's. He came to England in 1793, his official mission, according to Dr. Douglass, being "to thank his Majesty and his Majesty's ministers for having taken the Ecclesiastical State under protection" ; but also unofficially "secretly to inquire into the state of the English mission and report the same to Rome." This, of course, referred to the difficulties between the Committee party and the Vicars Apostolic,

ST. PATRICK'S, SOHO—OLD CHAPEL.

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and in the event his inquiries kept him in England for eight years, so that he was in London when Pope Pius VI died, which was on August 29, 1799. The Requiem at St. Patrick's was on November 16th following.

The account of Dr. Douglass is worth quoting in full :—

"November 16, 1799. On this day we had a solemn dirge and mass and the five Absolutions in St. Patrick's Chapel for the repose of His Holiness's soul. The whole chapel was draped in black except the columns of the altar and down the chapel (the capitals of which were covered) and the organ. The highest windows were left uncovered. Over these, as also along the rails of the galleries, under the lights, hung various mottoes, viz., 'Sapientiam ejus enarrabunt gentes et laudem ejus enuntiabit ecclesia,' &c. A *catafalco* was raised in the centre of the chapel, for which purpose the sanctuary rail and outer rail, with all the seats within them, were previously removed. On the coffin was placed the model of a Tiara. Painted escutcheons of the Arms of the Pope and of the Braschi family were placed about it, and on each side were tablets, as it were, on which were printed the cause of his exile and the place of his death. From the rail of the choir hung a large tablet on which was printed

the account of his birth, family, &c., in large letters.

"It was Mr. Webb's mass that was sung, and the whole was performed in a manner most solemn, awful, and impressive. The Bishops of Montpellier, Rhodez, Lombez, and Waterford assisted in mitres and black copes at the five Absolutions. I was the celebrant. The responses were in plain chant, except the Libera, which was in musick. Mr. Joseph Lee was Master of Ceremonies, and conducted the whole with propriety and grace. All was order, awful and solemn.

"The foreign ministers with their families were present, the Duchess of Devonshire, &c., the French Bishops, &c., and a very crowded assembly. Mr. O'Leary spoke the funeral oration—he only wore a black cassock in the pulpit, no surplice, no stole. The whole was at the expense of Mgr. Erskine and by his order. The office began at ten in the morning and finished at the half after three o'clock in the afternoon."

IX

CHURCH SERVICES

IF an average modern Catholic could be transported back to the London of a century ago, and were to enter a chapel, the first thing that would strike him would be its appearance of bareness and the absence of objects of devotion, a state of things no doubt traceable to Protestant surroundings and the spirit created by the Penal Laws. There was practically little beyond the high altar—no side altars, nor statues of the Blessed Virgin or the Saints. English Catholics were, indeed, often shy of devotion to our Lady, and it was customary to deprecate many practices of Catholic countries as bordering on the superstitious. Occasionally there was a mural slab in memory of some deceased priest or benefactor, or a picture or two about the walls. It was, of course, before the days when Stations of the Cross were common, and most of the walls were bare.

The high altar was usually of a well-defined

type—two or four pillars supporting an ornamental summit, the whole making the outer framework of a picture—sometimes a valuable one—which formed the altar-piece. A very common form of ornament was a small equilateral triangle, with the name of God in Hebrew, surrounded by rays—meant, of course, to symbolize the Blessed Trinity. This can be seen in several of the illustrations here reproduced. The Blessed Sacrament was kept at the high altar, and there were usually two sanctuary lamps.

There was likewise a great sameness in the appearance of the pulpits in the different churches. These were nearly all octagonal in shape, resting on a slender base, raising them up above the heads of the people; and they were always surmounted by a canopy or sounding-board of wood.

Except in the chief London churches, there was rarely any kind of confessional. Confessions were usually heard in the sacristy, or at the priest's house. This state of things went on in the provinces till comparatively late; even in the larger churches in London where confessionals existed they were not always used. There was no law enforcing their use, and the older clergy had become so accustomed to hear-

ST. PATRICK'S, SOHO.

High Altar in 1816.

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ing in their rooms that they continued to do so when there was the least excuse for it.[1] There are those still alive who have described the scene on a Saturday evening, when the line of penitents were kneeling all up the stairs of the priest's house, taking their turns for admission to his room. I do not think that confessionals became general before the First Provincial Council of Westminster, which ordered their erection in every church. There was never any permanent font in the church; the baptismal water was blessed privately and kept at the priest's house. Baptisms were, however, performed in the church, unless the distance was considerable, in which case the priest would take the baptismal water to the house where the child was born. A custom of administering wine from the chalice to children with whooping-cough lasted on till my own time—it was administered to myself under

[1] At St. Patrick's, Soho, for example, in 1794 there were four confessionals, three of which were under the stairs leading to the gallery at the back of the church, and the fourth at the other end, behind the altar, and used by those in the "enclosure"; but this latter seems to have fallen into disuse, and had disappeared before the time of Cardinal Wiseman, who makes various suggestions for remedying the defect and supplying a temporary confessional in the sacristy; for by that time their use was of obligation.

these circumstances—but I have never heard of its being done in recent years.[1]

The services on Sunday usually consisted of a high mass with sermon in the morning, and vespers, often with a catechetical instruction, in the afternoon ; or sometimes "evening prayers" at a later hour instead. A favourite form of devotion was that known as "Bona Mors," and a confraternity occasionally existed which used to meet in the church. They would put a pall on the ground to serve for a catafalque, and recite the office for the dead. There is no definite mention of Benediction in the *Directory* till the year 1808, and then only in one church, viz., Somers Town ; but it was certainly known long before then, and took place in all the churches from time to time, though whether every Sunday or only occasionally I am unable to say.[2]

[1] Several experienced priests have told me that they never heard of the custom ; but one who heard this paper subsequently wrote to say that there are one or two parishes in London in which the practice still obtains.

[2] Benediction was given once a month at Standon School as early as in 1753, and at St. Edmund's College it existed from the first. Among the articles stolen in the sacrilegious robbery in 1799 was a monstrance, and the one which replaced it is still at the College. And in several of the London churches I have found mention of the Benediction throne. Yet Benediction is not generally advertised in the *Directory* until about 1840.

In addition to the high mass there was, of course, an early mass—or more than one; and in the chief London churches there was at least one low mass every week-day, though it was not customary for each priest to celebrate every morning.

The music in vogue in the churches was always of the light and florid style. Charles Butler says the singing was at a low ebb before the time of Mr. Samuel Webbe, the well-known composer, whom he describes as "the father of the modern English school of Catholic Church music." Webbe was a well-known man even apart from his music, for he was a most industrious scholar and a great linguist. He could converse in seven different languages, and was said to have a perfect accent in most of them. According to Charles Butler he had two rules of life, one, "Never to let a bit or scrap of time pass unemployed," and the other, "Whatever he did, to fix his whole mind upon it." Webbe was the organist at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and wrote most of his music for that chapel. His style was suitable for the choirs of that day, being simple, melodious, and easy of performance. Some of his compositions are still sung by our country choirs. Charles Butler adds that at that time the music never reached a high level, as the choirs were not capable of it.

But a quarter of a century later, he writes: "Some of the finest services of Haydn and Mozart, and recently a service composed by Signor Garcia, and rivalling both the exquisite elegance and entrancing pathos of Pergolesi, are now excellently performed at the Bavarian Chapel. Even in this era of musical excellence" (he adds) "it may be doubted whether those who have not attended that service, performed, as it now is, by Begrez, Garcia, and Naldi, have heard the most perfect singing which England possesses."

It was at this time that Warwick Street Chapel began to be familiarly styled the "shilling opera," that being the price of the best seats. The reputation so acquired was maintained for many years afterwards. We have at St. Edmund's a copy of a mass written specially for the choir there in 1836, and dedicated to Bishop Griffiths, which would fairly come under the ban of the *Motu Proprio* of Pius X. All the mass is divided into separate pieces. The *Gloria in Excelsis*, for example, makes eight separate pieces—quartette, chorus, semichorus, tenor solo, terzetto, solo soprano, &c. To each piece is affixed the names of the singers for whom it was written, nearly all celebrated opera singers, some of whose fame has not even yet passed away. Here is a

list: Madame Malibran, Madame Fincklhor, Madame Garcia, and Madame degli Antoni; Signori Rubini, Ivanoff, Curioni, Begrez, Tamburini, and Lablache, the last named being the celebrated *buffo* at the Italian Opera. The composer was Signor Gesualdo Lanza, formerly choirmaster at the Portuguese Chapel, where, however, he had never had such an opportunity in the *personnel* of his choir. The price of the full score of the mass was £1 4s. od., and it evidently represented the summit of the ambitions of those who then controlled the music.

At the Portuguese Chapel in the time of Novello, there was likewise a strong musical tradition, as also at Spanish Place, where the well-known John Danby was organist until his death in 1798. Both of these had been pupils of Webbe at Lincoln's Inn Fields, Danby being, however, much the older of the two. Vincent Novello was born in 1781, and he showed so much genius that before he was seventeen years old he was appointed organist at the Portuguese Chapel, a post which he held for more than a quarter of a century. The work he succeeded in doing during that time, and the standard of music aimed at and apparently attained, are described by the sympathetic pen of his daughter, Mrs. Cowden Clarke, as follows :—

"Not only was his own performance on the organ fine and potential" (she writes), "but his ability in conducting the vocal choir was supreme. It became a fashion to hear the service at the Portuguese chapel, and South Street, on a Sunday, was thronged with carriages waiting outside, while their owners crowded to suffocation the small, taper-lighted space within. With attentive hush were oftentimes listened to, the strains of Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven or Himmel, in some soft offertory, breathed out by four well-disciplined voices, and sustained by Vincent Novello's smooth fingers, creeping with a certain maintained equipoise from note to note of the ivory keys, hardly whiter than his own hands. They were small, strongly knit, and remarkably pliant; with capability of stretching that fitted them admirably for organ-playing. The not very large, but exquisitely sweet-toned instrument that belonged to South Street chapel, had three rows of keys; over which the white, supple yet strenuous fingers of Vincent Novello used to wander with a touch almost loving in its caressing closeness. Now light and hovering in some florid passage of *Kyrie eleison;* now firm and dominant, in some assertive *Gloria in excelsis;* now rich and majestic in a lofty *Hosanna;* now full of pathos in an *Incarnatus est;* now per-

suasive and consoling in some *Benedictus;* now steadfast, strict, peremptory, yet withal instinct with spirit and animation, in some concluding fugue of exhortive *Dona nobis pacem.*" [1]

The above description is substantially confirmed by Charles Butler, who says that "for perfect organ accompaniment, a Catholic may confidently stake Mr. Novello, the organist of the chapel of the Portuguese, against all England." Nevertheless, in justice to that eminent writer, it should be added that he was not himself content with this style of music, and in view of the development which has taken place in these latter days, his plea for the restoration of Gregorian music has a special interest. He proceeds: "But, with great veneration for the excellence both of the composers and performers of these sacred strains, the writer has no hesitation in expressing a decided wish that the antient Gregorian song was restored to its pristine origin." Having given a short account of its history, he goes on to say: "[In church] let that music, and that music only, be performed which is at once simple and solemn, and which all can feel and in which most can join. Let it be strictly confined to pure melody; let the congregation be taught to sing it in exact unison, and with

[1] *Life and Labours of Vincent Novello,* p. 4.

subdued voices; let the accompaniment be full and chaste, never overwhelm the voice; and if it can be managed, in chanting the psalms let the trebles and tenors sing alternately: In a word, let it be Gregorian song, sung as it is [at Cossey.][1] And let it be accompanied by a Novello. A service thus performed will excite the finest feelings of piety, promote rational devotion, and in time equally satisfy the scientific and the unlearned."

In the country, at the chapels of the Catholic gentry, a form of English psalm singing had recently been introduced, and it seems to have become very popular. The "Come, let us adore," an adaptation of the psalm and Invitatory *Venite exultemus*, was sung before mass, and a collection of psalms in the evening. I have myself heard these at Ingatestone Hall, a former residence of the Petre family in Essex, and also at Courtfield, Cardinal Vaughan's home,[2] as well as elsewhere; but they do not seem to have penetrated into the towns as a rule, certainly

[1] Near Norwich, the seat of the family of Jerningham and of their descendants, the Lords Stafford.

[2] Cardinal Vaughan himself always liked these English psalms, having been, as he would say, brought up on them; and he introduced something similar into his Cathedral at Salford and elsewhere. The "Come, let us adore," was printed in the *Manual of Prayers;* but the old evening psalms are now very rarely to be met with.

never to the London churches, and when Bishop Gibson once heard them in a town in the north he was displeased with them, though he thought it more prudent not to take formal notice. He seems to have suspected their origin to have been connected with the Cisalpine spirit, and to a desire to assimilate our religious customs wherever possible to those of Protestants.

In the majority of the London churches Vespers were already properly performed. The tradition was very probably founded by the French clergy and laity, who were in London in such numbers at the end of the eighteenth century. The psalms were sung to the Gregorian tones, the antiphons to a fixed chant which I well remember as still common forty years ago. The only week-day services (beyond the morning mass) were in Lent, when there was usually Compline and a discourse once a week. There was never anything of the nature of a procession, and the liturgical services which might include them—as on Candlemas Day or Palm Sunday—were carried out with a minimum of ceremonial. In like manner, the Holy Week services were carried out in a very unpretending fashion ; but in most churches the essential parts were performed, including the arrangement of the so-called "sepulchre," for which the old French custom

of decorating the altar with the empty chalices and other church plate survived for many years. Tenebræ was always sung, or at least recited.

The vestments in use were of the French shape and style, the dalmatics having the characteristic flaps for sleeves, the stole and maniple having large, shovel ends. The cottas also were French, without sleeves—a pattern which lasted till within my own memory. The subdeacon of the mass was usually the preacher, but before the sermon he would disappear into the sacristy to take off his tunicle and come out to preach in cotta and stole. It is instructive to notice that it was found necessary to specify in what language the sermon was to be. Usually it was in English ; but in a church such as, for example, Somers Town, which was largely frequented by foreigners, there would be a French sermon on alternate Sundays. At the Sardinian Chapel they had occasional sermons in Italian.

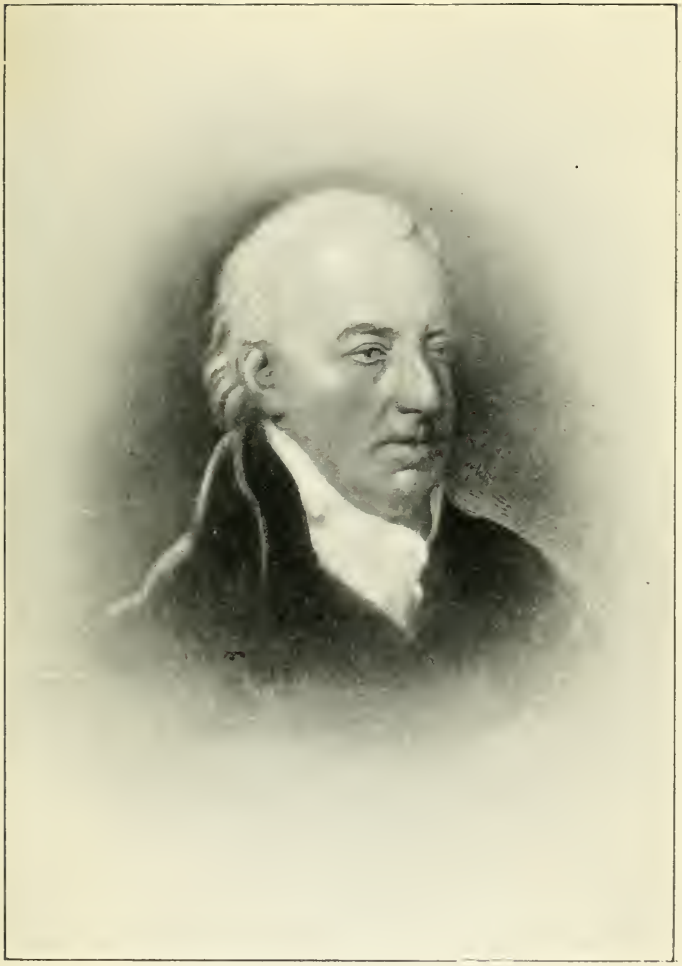
With respect to the style of preaching in vogue a century ago, we may say at once that the pompous language of which we have come across quotations in the preceding pages found a complete counterpart in the style of the discourses. Indeed, the sermons were usually written out in full, and read from a manuscript. We have at Old Hall a large collection of the

sermons of Dr. Douglass, which he appears to have written for ordinary weekly use, probably when on the mission at York. Several volumes of Dr. Archer's sermons were published [1] and are still often met with. Some of them incurred the displeasure of Dr. Milner, and a sharp controversy ensued. It is instructive to notice that one of the faults found was Dr. Archer's "indulgent compounding with the dangerous amusements of the theatre"—a subject on which Dr. Milner always held very strict views.

Having mentioned Dr. Archer's name, I must add a little more about him, for he was one of the most prominent figures of Catholic London a century ago. His history is a remarkable one. Born in 1751, he began life in the employment of the "Ship" public-house in Little Turnstile, between Lincoln's Inn Fields and Holborn. The house is still standing. It was one of the places whither the Catholics of London used to repair to hear the sermon, which could not be preached publicly, even at the embassy chapels, on account of the Penal Laws. It has often been told how Dr. Challoner would preach at the "Ship," and the hearers would sit around tables, with pots of beer

[1] I am told, however, that Dr. Archer used to preach extempore; and so, I imagine, did Bishop Hussey; but not so Father O'Leary, who conformed to the general English custom and read his sermons.

before them as a precaution. In this way he came across young Archer, and, being struck by his piety, sent him to Douay to study for the priesthood. Archer returned on his ordination in 1780, reaching London just after the Gordon Riots had taken place, and he soon became a renowned preacher. The Rev. E. Price—the author of the once popular book entitled *Sick Calls*—used to say that he owed his conversion to Dr. Archer's preaching, and he has left us a personal description of him. "He was very short of stature," he writes, "not perhaps more than five feet one or two. But he had a magnificent head; his brow was wonderfully ample and intellectual; his deep grey eye shone with a flashing brilliancy until his seventieth year and upwards. His voice was silvery in its tone, exquisitely musical in its cadences, and wonderfully distinct in the pulpit. He was justly considered as the father of pulpit oratory in England; and his whole missionary career, for near half a century, was earnestly devoted to preaching the Gospel on each returning Sunday. I believe he never missed one through that extended period. In his later years, when I first had the happiness of hearing him, he was much afflicted by a paralytic affection of the left side; and though at times he must have endured great agony, his voice never faltered, but



REV. JAMES ARCHER, D.D.

From a painting at Archbishop's House, Westminster.

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the same flow of musical eloquence was heard from the announcement of the text to the final blessing and amen. Shortly after my conversion, in the year 1822, I saw the venerable little man for the first time out of the pulpit. He was busily employed in looking over some books in front of an old shop in Holborn. I stood behind him for more than five minutes, gazing with reverence upon him whose eloquent sermons had been so mainly instrumental in promoting my conversion. His dress was certainly rather slovenly. A long brown great coat, much the worse for wear, nearly down to his heels; an old broad-brimmed hat; and thick-soled shoes, a world too large for his feet, and which had evidently been soled a score of times. Though I took in these discrepancies at a glance, I thought not of them, but of the mind and heart they concealed." [1]

After Dr. Archer, perhaps the best known preacher in London was Dr. Hussey, of the Spanish Chapel. A comparative estimate of these two has been left us by Charles Butler,[2] who often heard both of them, and his description will help us to form an idea of the style of preaching adopted by each.

[1] *Sick Calls*, p. 185.
[2] *Historical Memoirs*, ii. p. 325.

Of Bishop Hussey he writes :—

"His eloquence in the pulpit was really great, but it rather subdued than satisfied reason. The writer of these pages was present at a sermon which he preached on the small number of the elect. Copying Massillon, he asked, 'Whether if the arch of heaven were to open, and the Son of Man bursting from the mercy in which He is now enveloped should stand in that chapel and judge his hearers—it were quite certain that three or even two—nay, trembling for myself, as well as for you !—is it quite certain that *even one of us!*' exclaimed the doctor in a voice of thunder, 'would be saved ?' During the whole of this apostrophe," he adds, "the audience was agonised. At the ultimate interrogation there was a general shriek—and some fell on the ground."

Mr. Butler tells us that this was "the greatest triumph of eloquence that [he had] ever chanced to witness," and judging by its results, we perhaps should hardly wish for any greater ; but he adds that "it rather subdued than satisfied."

Speaking of Dr. Archer, however, he writes as follows :—

"A style of preaching very different from that of doctor Hussey has been adopted by the Reverend James Archer. It was *his* aim to satisfy

reason whilst he pleased, charmed, and instructed her; to impress upon the mind just notions of the mysteries and truths of the gospel; and to show that the ways of virtue are the ways of pleasantness, and her paths the paths of peace. No one has returned from any of his sermons without impressions favourable to virtue; or without some practical lesson which through life, probably in a few days, perhaps even in a few hours, it would be useful for him to remember. When we recall that this is the 34th year of Mr. Archer's predication" (Butler was writing in 1815); "that he has preached oftener than fifty-two times in every year; and that in the present his hearers hang on all he says with the same avidity as they did in the first, we must think it difficult to find an individual to whose eloquence religion has in our time been so greatly indebted."

Another well-known preacher of the day was Father O'Leary of Soho, of whom I have already spoken; another was Rev. Morgan Darcy, one of his curates. A few years later Dr. Poynter was frequently to be heard in the London pulpits, especially on the occasions of sermons in favour of special charities. It is relating to one of these occasions that we find the following vivid description of his style: "His lordship," it is said,

"with that peculiar energy and confidence which a consciousness of truth alone inspires, beautifully explained the unity and harmony subsisting in the Catholic faith, and with an animated voice and action, elegant and well suited to the subject, with a dignity becoming his high station, and yet with a mildness and piety belonging to the true servant of God, he seriously exhorted all strictly to conform their lives to the sublime and infallible maxims of their holy religion."[1]

The Vicars Apostolic seem to have usually contented themselves with a single pastoral every year, at the beginning of Lent. The London Vicars Apostolic, from Challoner onwards, indeed used often to write what he termed a "New Year's Gift," which were later on printed in the *Catholic Directory;* but it was not read out in the chapels. From time to time, on special occasions, a special pastoral—usually a very short one—might be written. We read more than once of a Bishop setting apart a day for special prayer and humiliation, to appease the Divine Majesty, in view of the calamitous events of the times. The following circular letter from Dr. Douglass on the victory of Trafalgar is an instance of a special occasion, which is particularly apposite here, as it concerns the year 1805—exactly a century ago. The copy

[1] *Catholic Miscellany*, August, 1823, p. 378.

before me is apparently that from which it was read in the College Chapel at Old Hall.

"DEAR SIR,—Since our Father in heaven has been pleased to grant to his Majesty's arms a complete victory over the combined fleets of his enemies, we appoint that all the clergy of the London District who have the care of congregations, or who officiate to such, shall on Thursday, the fifth of December next, recite or sing, or cause to be recited or sung, the Hymn *Te Deum*, with the prayer *Deus cujus misericordiae*,[1] in thanksgiving for that signal blessing.

"We also appoint that, after the same, be recited or sung, or caused to be recited or sung, the Psalm *Exaudiat te Dominus, &c.*, with the Prayer for the King and Royal Family.

"You will please to give notice hereof to the Faithful committed to your care, and exhort them to attend at the Chapel on that day, and unite with you, their Pastor, in the said public prayers.

"London, 20 November, 1805.

"✠ JOHN CENTURIEN, V.A.L."

[1] Post Miss. Vot. de SS^ma^ Trinitate.

X

THE CONGREGATIONS AND CATHOLIC LAITY

LET us now see if we can form for ourselves a picture of a London congregation of a century ago. The arrangement of the seats was totally unlike anything to be seen now. In this respect there were, indeed, considerable differences of detail between chapel and chapel; but the same general features were to be seen in each.

In the first place, there was no central gangway right up the church such as is now almost universal. In front of the altar rails were several rows of pew-like benches, shut in, and known as "the Enclosure." These were meant for those who could afford to pay, and the charge was commonly sixpence or a shilling. They were not, however, usually the best seats. The regular supporters of the mission would occupy seats in "the Tribune," which was commonly adjacent to the sanctuary, and raised a step or two above the ground, and whenever possible, there would

be a separate access to it. At the back of the "enclosure" was a large open space, known as "the Body of the Church," which was open to all without payment; but no seats were provided. It was occupied, of course, by the poor, and as there was much more difference between the classes a century ago than now, they would have been of a very rough type. In churches like Warwick Street, or Soho, or Lincoln's Inn Fields, where there were in the same mission rich and fashionable people, and also many of the very poorest classes, the separation between the enclosure and the body of the church was made very complete. At Soho, for example, there was a second set of rails behind the enclosure, and all those in the body of the church received Holy Communion at them from a second priest, whilst the priest saying mass gave Communion at the altar rails to those in the enclosure or tribune. At the same church, and possibly elsewhere, there was a glass screen between the two parts, which was not removed till the middle of last century.

Between the rich in the enclosure and the poor in the body of the chapel, there was an intermediate or middle class, including tradesmen and clerks, &c., and also domestic servants, most of whom had been brought up on the

estates of the old Catholic families. All these would have gone in the galleries, where a small charge was made, and seats provided, though very plain ones, sometimes like school forms, without backs. There was almost always a gallery on each side, and one at the back. In this latter, or sometimes over it in a second gallery, the organ was built, and the singers stood round it. Then some part would be reserved for children of the school, if there was one. At Soho they were placed on each side of the organ, boys one side and girls the other. They always attended in their uniforms, the boys dressed in green, being known as the "grasshoppers," and the girls having white pinafores over green gowns.[1]

[1] All the above features can be seen in one or other of the illustrations. The enclosure is plainest in the picture of St. George's Fields, and in the old print of Lincoln's Inn; but it can also be seen in the modern photograph of St. Patrick's, Soho. The general arrangement there continued till the church was pulled down: the "tribune" remained to the end. At Warwick Street the tribune was abolished many years ago; but the old arrangement of the benches survived till within living memory. The "enclosure" was reached from the middle door by a central gangway, railed off from the body of the church; those in the body entered by the side doors, and in the latter half of the nineteenth century, benches, or rather forms, without backs, were provided. The whole seating on the ground floor was remodelled when Mgr. Talbot added

The stamp of piety among the old Catholics of the upper classes has already been alluded to. That of the lower classes was a reflection of it, and included the same features—extreme strictness in their daily life, united to a dry but very earnest form of prayer. Many of the poor were very rough in their outward bearing, and this often affected their behaviour in chapel. But those who were really pious emulated the customs of the rich, and their outward bearing was irreproachable. Those who could read would have their books open before them, and I believe they would have followed the mass by saying the prayers at the different parts with their lips, while the demeanour of all alike would have been as solemn and prim as the most old-fashioned Protestant could desire. Their prayer-books were the *Garden of the Soul*, compiled by Challoner, a revised form of which is still in use, and the *Double Manual*, which has long since been forgotten. The freedom of devotion so conspicuous in Catholic countries was entirely absent; people assembled for service, and at its conclusion they dispersed. The churches were

the new sanctuary thirty years ago; but in the galleries the old pews—for such they are—still remain. At Lincoln's Inn the only tribune was in the gallery, where the Ambassador sat.

never open except for service; it would hardly have been safe to have left them open at other times.

In their social life, the Catholics of those days kept very much to themselves, and had little intercourse with their Protestant neighbours. Cardinal Newman's well-known passage describing Catholics as viewed from outside might, I think, be matched by one giving the view of the lives of Protestants held by Catholics. They took the theological maxim, *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*, in its narrowest sense; the most that they would ever admit was that non-Catholics might "practise natural virtues," a phrase which sufficiently met the theological difficulty created by the obvious excellence in private life of many of them. They had been brought up to look on the claims of the Church as so clear and unanswerable that the idea that any one could honestly think otherwise hardly even occurred to them. In an account of one of Dr. Milner's Confirmation sermons, we read towards the beginning that "His Lordship then in a few short arguments proved the truth of the Catholic religion"; and this tone of mind was typical of the faith of the Catholics of those days. In similar manner we read in one of Dr. Poynter's sermons that, "in a clear argumenta-

tive strain of reasoning [he] demonstratively proved the certainty of the truth on which the testimony of the Catholic faith is founded," all in the preamble of the sermon !

This attitude of mind lasted to within living memory, and indeed, had not the Oxford Movement broadened the minds of the old Catholics by bringing them into close intimacy with many converts, might have continued till now. In those days there was no anxiety to make converts, the summit of the ambition of the Catholics being simply to be allowed themselves to practise their religion unmolested. Mixed marriages were rare ; but, curiously, when they did occur, the conditions which appear to have been tolerated by the Church—though they could never have been formally approved—were easier than those in force at the present day. The children used to be divided in their religion, the boys following that of the father and the girls that of the mother ; and all marriages, whether mixed or not, had to take place in a Protestant church in order to be legal. They would, of course, be celebrated in a Catholic church first, and it was well understood that what took place in the Protestant church was to be looked upon only as a civil rite. Nevertheless, Dr. Milner complained that often, through ignorance, people

would go to the Protestant church first, in which case, according to theological principles, the marriage there would be valid and the subsequent one in the Catholic church would be a mere empty ceremony. For this reason he urged that the people should be frequently reminded of this fact, so as to put a stop to the abuse.

One result of the aloofness of Catholics from their Protestant neighbours was that they were able to keep the Friday abstinence and the Lenten and other fasts without difficulty. The laws in those days were very strict. The dispensations in force in 1805 allowed meat only three days a week in Lent, namely, Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and on the latter two only once in the day ; and no meat was taken during the last ten days before Easter. It was, moreover, customary to expect any non-Catholic who might have meals in a Catholic house to conform to these rules. At the Synod of 1803 confessors were given power to dispense from this rule, but only when its enforcement would cause grave inconvenience. And these regulations, strict as they sound to our modern ears, were considered to be a considerable relaxation on former times. Less than twenty years before, "Black Lents," as they were called—that

is, with no meat from Ash Wednesday till Easter —were the ordinary rule; and when Bishop Talbot first gave leave for meat he added a rider forbidding eggs on meat days. "We think it cannot be a hardship," he writes, "to abstain from eggs when meat is allowed. It may indeed be some inconvenience in great entertainments, but these it is our desire, as it is our duty, to discourage in Lent." He warns those who fast that neither cheese, butter, milk, nor fish of any kind can be used at collation, about which he lays down, "though the quantity [allowed] cannot be precisely ascertained, it must not at least amount to anything like a meal."

In picturing to ourselves the appearance of a London congregation a century ago, the curious effect (to our eyes) of the dresses of the period, both for men and women, must not be lost sight of. In the case of a priest, when not in vestments, the difference from what we are now accustomed to see was even greater, for he would dress in the ordinary lay costume of the period. At the end of mass he would take off his cassock as a matter of course, just as he would take off his alb, and would kneel outside the sanctuary. Sometimes there was a kind of priests' tribune. When the Vicars Apostolic lived in Golden Square, they had an "episcopal

pew" reserved for their use in Warwick Street Chapel, ornamented with a carved mitre. At the beginning of the century, the clergy did not usually even dress in black. The law of shaving was in force, but before the French Revolution the custom was so common that it was not particularly distinctive of the clergy; and when, later on, it became fashionable to let whiskers grow, the priests frequently wore what was called the "clerical inch," which equally prevented any distinctive appearance of their ecclesiastical state. This was in order to save them from being insulted in the streets—no doubt a useful precaution in the eighteenth century, but one which rapidly became unnecessary in the nineteenth. It is curious to note that Dr. Milner always dressed in a brown coat and was not recognised as a priest, while the first to adopt a stricter attitude was Rev. Joseph Berington, who was a well-known writer of doubtful orthodoxy: he began to dress regularly in black early in the nineteenth century, and was blamed by many for so doing. I need not say that the Roman collar was unknown till some thirty years later. Wigs were getting less common a century ago, though the older clergy still wore them. Dr. Douglass is always represented with one—of a close-fitting type, quite different

from that which Dr. Challoner used to wear; but Dr. Poynter never wore a wig, nor did Dr. Milner. They would have powdered their hair instead, and this custom of powdering was strictly observed by all those who ministered at the altar almost till Wiseman's time.[1]

The Rev. Joseph Berington, to whom I have just alluded, was a man of considerable interest, and a few further details about him may be given. He was a cousin of Bishop Charles Berington, for whom, however, he entertained scant respect. They lived together at Old Oscott for about ten years, till 1793, in which year the school was opened there, and Joseph Berington left and became chaplain to Sir John Throckmorton, at Buckland, Berks, where he spent the remaining thirty-four years of his life. His writings are very numerous, and show a cynical mind and a continual tendency to unorthodoxy. This had shown itself so early as when he was Professor of Philosophy at Douay in 1771, and it is said that the Theses he drew out for defension were the cause of his leaving. Later on he thoroughly identified himself with his patron, Sir

[1] Dr. Weathers, Bishop Auxiliary to Cardinal Manning, who was ordained priest in 1838, is reported to have been the first to discard the custom of powdering before singing mass.

John Throckmorton, in all his actions, and was, no doubt, in great part responsible for the theological defence of the opinions of the Cisalpines. This led to his being suspended by Dr. Douglass on two occasions, and several years passed before he made a sufficient retractation to have his faculties restored. Nevertheless, his writings show a large amount of learning and literary sense, and are a most valuable contribution to the Catholic history of his day. He led a studious and retired life in the country, and it was only rarely that he was to be seen in London. His sympathies were with the most extreme members of the Committee party, and this naturally caused him to be generally looked upon with suspicion ; but as the friction between them and the Vicars Apostolic was gradually smoothed over, the prejudice against him was dispelled, and during the last years of his life according to Mr. Gillow, he was greatly respected. He died at Buckland in 1827, and was buried, by the express desire of Sir Charles Throckmorton, in his own vault in the chancel of the parish church, where a mural monument in his memory can be seen to the present day. The inscription was written by Dr. Bew, who was for fifteen years President of Oscott, and for a short time also of St. Edmund's College.

REV. JOSEPH BERINGTON.

From a silhouette reproduced in the Catholic Directory for 1831.

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It is so characteristic of its time that, long as it is, I venture to give it in full :—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
THE REVEREND AND VENERABLE
JOSEPH BERINGTON
LICENTIATE IN DIVINITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DOUAY
DURING 34 YEARS
PASTOR OF THE CATHOLIC CONGREGATION OF BUCKLAND
FRIEND AND CHAPLAIN OF
SIR JOHN, SIR GEORGE AND SIR CHARLES THROCKMORTON
IN THE DISCHARGE OF THE DUTIES OF HIS MINISTRY
HE WAS ASSIDUOUS, KIND AND CHARITABLE
AT THE ALTAR DEVOUT AND DIGNIFIED
IN THE PULPIT PERSPICUOUS AND IMPRESSIVE
HIS WRITINGS, RELIGIOUS AND HISTORICAL,
ARE MARKED BY EXTENT OF RESEARCH
DEPTH OF THOUGHT, ENERGY OF EXPRESSION
CLEARNESS AND ELEGANCE OF STYLE
SINCERELY ATTACHED TO HIS FAITH, HIS UNDEVIATING
VIRTUE WAS THE EXPRESSION OF HIS CONVICTION
HIS WHOLE LIFE A RECOMMENDATION OF HIS CREED
NEITHER JUDGING NOR DESPISING HIS BROTHER
HE WILLINGLY FORMED
INTIMATE CONNECTIONS WITH THE GOOD AND WORTHY
OF OTHER COMMUNIONS
IN HIS MANNERS HE WAS CONCILIATING
MODERATE IN SUPPORTING HIS OWN SENTIMENTS
CANDID IN ESTIMATING THE ARGUMENTS OF OTHERS
PARTIAL TO AMICABLE DISCUSSION
ADVERSE TO INTEMPERATE CONTESTS ; HIS OBJECT WAS
TRUTH NOT VICTORY
IN HIS FRIENDSHIP WARM AND STEADY
FULL OF DAYS AND GOOD WORKS HE DEPARTED THIS LIFE
DECEMBER 1ST 1827 AGED EIGHTY YEARS.
R.I.P.

Sir John Throckmorton, with whom Mr. Berington had worked for so many years, was, perhaps, the most extreme and likewise the most influential of the Committee party. In his two published *Letters to the Catholic Clergy of England*, he maintains astounding propositions—such as, for example, that a Catholic at the time of the Reformation might have acknowledged the royal supremacy over the Church ; and he was the chief advocate of the right of the people to elect their own Bishops. He denounced the appointment of Dr. Douglass as "obnoxious and improper," and was quite ready to take action, had he been supported, to try to obtain a nullification of the election. But the Catholic body were at heart far too loyal to ecclesiastical authority to go to the length that he wished. He himself, however, went to Rome, where his winning manners seem to have secured for him a hearing, and eventually obtained sufficient influence to be an embarrassment to the Vicars Apostolic. The mission of Mgr. Erskine to England in 1793 seems to have been in great measure due to him, and on arriving in England Mgr. Erskine visited him and other members of the Committee party long before he even saw the Bishops. However, when he read the "Blue Books" and was

made acquainted with the true state of affairs, Mgr. Erskine took quite another view, and reported to Rome in that sense.

Throughout all this time Sir John Throckmorton was living as a good Catholic in accordance with his time, and to the end he was much respected in private life. He died in 1819. Charles Butler gives a short appreciation of his character and work in the following words :—

"Sir John Throckmorton was extensively known, and nowhere known where his probity, his experience, his extensive endowments and polished manners did not obtain universal regard and reverence. Those who differed most from him did justice to his talents, his candour and his consistency."[1]

The other chief leader of the Catholic Committee party and the Cisalpine Club was Robert Edward, tenth Lord Petre, at whose town house in Park Lane the meetings used sometimes to be held. He also must have been in private life a man of remarkable goodness and charity. Charles Butler says of him : "All his actions are distinguished by rectitude, openness, and dignity ; his ample fortune sunk under his beneficence. . . . In the exercise of his bounty he knew no distinction of persons. It may be truly said that

[1] *Hist. Memoirs*, ii. p. 201.

he was born to relieve the distressed, to spread happiness among his friends, and to promote and illustrate the Catholic cause."[1] He died in 1801.[2]

In connection with Lord Petre, it is necessary to mention a priest who was regarded by many as having openly ceased to be a Christian, and who had undoubtedly ceased to exercise his priestly functions. I allude to Dr. Alexander Geddes, a Scotchman, a graduate of Aberdeen University and a man of wide knowledge and learning, whom Professor Cheyne reckons among the precursors of "higher criticism."[3] Having quarrelled with his Bishop, he came to London about 1782 and was attached to Lincoln's Inn for a year. After that he ceased to do any missionary work, and devoted himself to producing a new English translation of the Bible. In order to facilitate this undertaking Lord Petre gave him a pension of £200 a year, so that he might have the necessary leisure to

[1] *Hist. Memoirs*, ii. p. 199.

[2] It was this Lord Petre who, at his own expense, raised and equipped a corps of 250 men for the service of his country during the Napoleonic wars, and petitioned that his son might be appointed to command them. Owing, however, to his religion, his petition was refused, and his son served as a private.

[3] See *Founders of Old Testament Criticism* (Methuen, 1893).

complete it. The first volume appeared in 1792, the second in 1797. The translation was accompanied by numerous notes. Both text and notes were much criticized for their style, and a volume of explanation and criticism, which he published at the same time, for its downright unorthodoxy. Charles Butler says that "he absolutely denied the doctrine of the divine inspiration of the sacred writings; expressed himself very slightingly on several opinions universally received and respected by the Church; and generally adopted the German scheme of rationalizing the narrative of the Old Testament.

"The frequent levity of his expressions" (he continues) "was certainly very repugnant not only to the rules of religion, but to good sense. This fault he carried in a still greater degree into his conversation. It gave general offence; but those who knew him, while they blamed and lamented his aberrations, did justice to his learning, to his friendly heart, and guileless simplicity. Most unjustly" (says Butler) "has he been termed an infidel. He professed himself a Trinitarian; a believer in the resurrection; in the divine origin and divine mission of Christ, in support of which he published a small tract. He also professed to believe what he termed the leading

and unadulterated tenets of the Roman Catholic Church. From her—however scanty his creed might be—he did not so far recede as was generally thought. The estrangement of his brethren from him was most painful to his feelings. The writer has more than once witnessed his lamenting the circumstance with great agitation, and even with bitter tears."[1] He died in 1802.

• Perhaps this will be a suitable place to make some remarks on the character and life of Charles Butler himself, whose writings I have had such frequent occasion to quote. That he was one of the most striking personalities of Catholic London of his day no one will deny. Like his uncle, Rev. Alban Butler, the author of the *Lives of the Saints*, he was educated at Douay, and he appears to have rivalled him in learning, while he led a life of unceasing industry and labour. His works fill many volumes, and show an extraordinary versatility of genius, for he could write in turn, with almost equal facility, on law, history, social questions, music or Holy Scripture. He completed Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints* down to his own date; and also brought out an edition of the *Imitation of Christ*, with a *Life of Thomas à Kempis*. His chief

[1] *Hist. Memoirs*, ii. p. 303.

legal work was his continuation and completion of Hargrave's edition of Coke's *Littleton*. He edited several of his uncle's works, and wrote a volume of his own reminiscences. But perhaps his best known work among Catholics is his four volumes of *Historical Memoirs of English, Irish and Scottish Catholics*, from which I have several times quoted in the preceding pages. It is well known that this book brought him into conflict with Dr. Milner, who replied to him by his *Supplementary Memoirs*.

Charles Butler was a lawyer and his great ambition was to see the Penal Laws against Catholics repealed, so that he might reach the higher ranks of his profession. For this end he worked hard for many years, and had the satisfaction of seeing the Relief Act of 1791, on the passing of which he was the first Catholic to profit by it by being called to the Bar. Forty years later, after the passing of the Emancipation Act, he became the first Catholic K.C. under peculiarly gratifying circumstances. The Attorney-General of the day, Sir Thomas Denman, a former pupil of his, informed him that the Lord Chancellor wished to apply for this dignity on his behalf if he would accept it; and the King himself, when granting it, expressed himself as "happy to confer an honour on so

learned and worthy a person." Hardly less gratifying was the present of a silver urn with a purse of £1,000, presented to Mr. Butler by the English Catholics on the passing of the Emancipation Act, in grateful remembrance of his long and faithful labour on their behalf, in working for that end.

Unfortunately it cannot be questioned that in his action on ecclesiastical matters Mr. Butler laid himself open to criticism more than once. As secretary of the Catholic Committee and closely identified with the composition of the "Blue Books," he fell under definite ecclesiastical censure; and although he made a sufficient retractation to satisfy his conscience, his tone of mind remained much what it had been. He was a prominent member of the Cisalpine Club, and always identified himself with that party. In his *Historical Memoirs* he speaks in high terms of the public action of Lord Petre and Sir John Throckmorton, and is proud to call them his friends. All his legal knowledge and his ability were always at their disposal, and his activity with his pen and his large influence made him a valuable ally. His action led to a continuous and acrimonious conflict with Dr. Milner; and although Dr. Poynter was personally friendly with him, he was well aware of the

MR. CHARLES BUTLER, K.C.

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tendencies of Butler's mind, and trusted to his own personal influence to keep these in check. Perhaps "an anticlerical mind" would be the modern equivalent of his attitude; and although, with the exception of the one occasion alluded to before, it would be hard to point to any definite instance when he merited direct censure, it is certainly an exaggeration of his biographer to say that "his orthodoxy has never been impeached."[1]

Nevertheless, in his private life Charles Butler was pious and earnest in the practice of his religion. For many years he lived in Great Ormond Street, and was a constant member of the congregation of Lincoln's Inn Chapel, near which his chambers were situated. He is described as dignified and gentlemanly in appearance, above middle size, while "his features were heavy—fleshy—and the eye was not particularly brilliant; but the forehead was redolent of intellect. Though rather impatient," it is added, "he was one of the most kind-hearted of men. His friends loved [him], his family adored him."[2] His custom of joining in the recital of Tenebræ in Holy Week at the Bishop's residence has

[1] *Catholic Magazine*, July, 1832, p. 448.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 449. It may be noted that one of the best known County Court Judges of recent years—His Honour Judge Stonor—is a grandson of Charles Butler.

already been alluded to, and is quite characteristic. As I have already said, many of those most identified with the public acts of the Cisalpines, in private led strict lives and gave large sums of money to the poor and to the support of religion. A large proportion, indeed, of those who would have been prominent in the enclosures and tribunes of the London congregations of 1805 would have had more or less sympathy with the Cisalpines, though often enough without any close knowledge of the questions raised by them.

XI

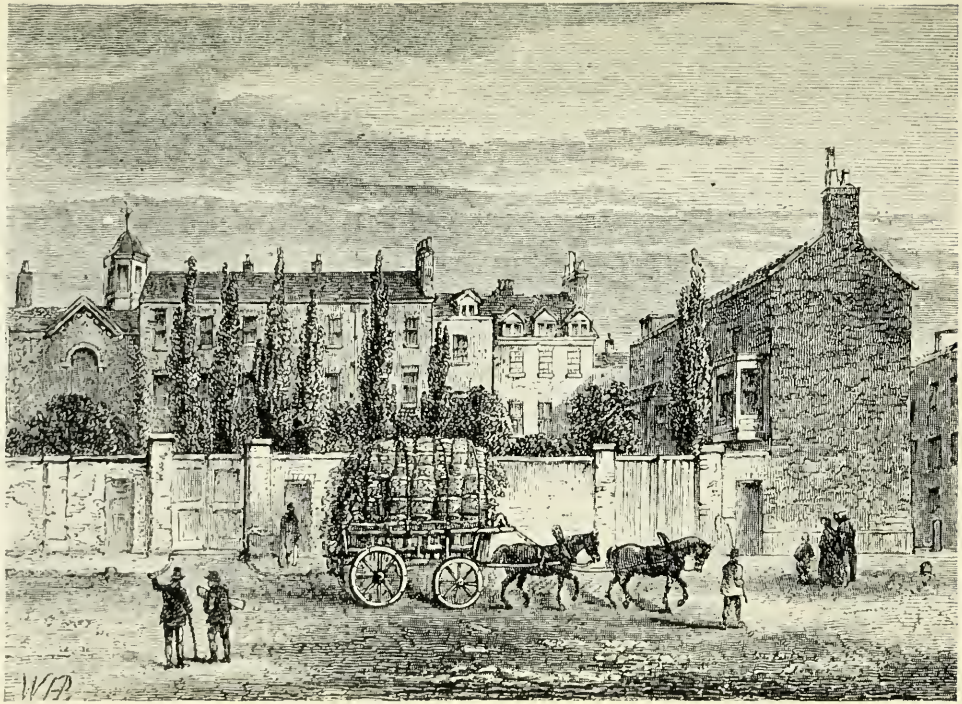
CONVENTS, SCHOOLS, CHARITIES, &c.

IT should perhaps be explained that all the priests in London in 1805 were seculars. The Society of Jesus was still suppressed throughout the world; and though the Benedictines did a good deal of missionary work in the West and North of England, they had no house in London. Nor were there any convents of nuns. The members of the English houses abroad had, indeed, been driven back to England by the French Revolution, and had settled in different parts of the country, and there were several convents in the London District, but none in London itself. The nearest was at Hammersmith, which was always a Catholic centre; but it was outside London in those days.

The convent at Hammersmith was formerly occupied by the nuns of the Institute of Mary, founded by Mary Ward, and was one of the only

two convents[1] in England in penal times. The nuns did not wear the religious habit, but in other respects they kept their rule in its entirety. Towards the end of the eighteenth century their numbers were dwindling, and at the time when the French Revolution broke out, and many communities of nuns were expelled from their convents abroad, and arrived in London homeless and destitute, there were only three nuns at Hammersmith, who, with great generosity, offered to receive one of the homeless communities. The offer was accepted by the Benedictines from Dunkirk, who entered into possession in May, 1795. Very soon afterwards their Abbess, Dame Anne Clavering, died, and Dr. Douglass forthwith consecrated part of the garden and made it into a cemetery. He describes the funeral in his diary. "The nuns walked before," he says, "two by two, then followed the Rev. Mr. Lee, in surplice and stole, the corpse next, supported by the lay sisters. Mr. Gomme's men attended." This must have been quite the first ceremony of the kind in England for several centuries, and we are not surprised to read that "Mr. Bonham's (the Cupola House)

[1] The other was of the same congregation, at Micklegate Bar, York. This still continues in the same place where it was founded in 1686.



THE CONVENT, HAMMERSMITH.

From "Old and New London" (by permission of Messrs. Cassell).

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windows were lined with spectators." Nor is it altogether surprising that the sudden appearance in England of many communities of nuns caused some uneasiness here and there. At Winchester, Dr. Milner carried out the profession of a daughter of Mr. Weld with full ritual, and this was one cause of calling attention to them. We read in Dr. Douglass's Diary as follows :—

"A poem by Dr. Hudson, of Oxford (it is said he is the author), against the monks of La Trappe being settled in England by Mr. Weld. Many skitts in the newspapers against the nuns of Amesbury. Francis Eyre, Esq., desires Mr. Archer to inform me that he finds the Gentlemen of Oxford talk much against the opening and establishing of convents, complain of the parade with which Miss Weld was professed at Winchester (in truth there was not any parade on the occasion), but allow that we clergy may have Colleges to educate clergymen as our religion is tolerated or even protected by the law of the land. I read Mr. Eyre's letter. The skitts were answered and scouted (in the newspapers) for their illiberality."

Apparently the "Gentlemen of Oxford" were not the only persons disturbed in mind by the presence of the nuns in England. Some of the Cisalpines were known not to have too much

sympathy with the monastic life, and they showed their uneasiness in several ways, one being a petition that the nuns might not be allowed to wear their habits. Nevertheless, Lord Petre was afterwards very kind to the nuns; he "told his steward to send them greens," and conferred other small favours on them. The public uneasiness eventually gave birth to a Bill in Parliament for the inspection of convents, and to prohibit them from receiving novices, which passed the House of Commons in 1800, but was thrown out by the Lords. For several years after that the nuns in most convents did not wear the religious habits, or only wore them in the morning when they were indoors, and no one was likely to see them. But in time the popular prejudice was dispelled, and I think before 1810, all nuns had resumed wearing their habits.[1]

Later on, in 1814, Dr. Poynter established a "Society of Charitable Sisters," who were lay women. Their object was to work in the East-end and elsewhere in a similar manner to those belonging to the Ladies of Charity established in

[1] When Dr. Poynter became Vicar Apostolic, he consented to request that in convents where nuns were still receiving relief from public funds—which was given to all those who came over before 1794—they should abstain from wearing their religious habit. This was one of the points brought up against him in Rome by Dr. Milner.

recent years by Cardinal Vaughan. One of their chief works is described officially as "to distribute clothing to cover the shivering members of the orphan and hapless children of indigence and misery." The society lasted for many years, and did excellent work; but the members were not in any sense nuns.

At most of the convents there were boarding-schools, and here again the only one near London was at the Hammersmith Convent. There were also several private schools kept by seculars, at or near Brook Green, Hammersmith, as well as two—one for boys and the other for girls—under the direction of Abbé Carron, at Somers Town. Some of the conditions specified in the various prospectuses look to our modern eyes quaint enough. It was found necessary by Abbé Carron to state that "the young gentlemen sleep in separate beds"; and "each gentleman must furnish himself with a bed and bed-furniture." Instruction in "cyphering" and "the use of the globes" is hardly even intelligible to us; and when they are explained as "branches of an ornamental education," we are not much the wiser. Among things charged for as extras we find "washing, tea and sugar, wine and medical assistance"; and apparently, also, the French language, this only "if taught grammatically."

But perhaps the most curious phrasing of all is in the prospectus of a girls' boarding-school in Holland Street, Kensington, where we read that: "The children wear a uniform at the expense of their friends, viz., a frock pink-striped for every day, white on Sunday."

With respect to elementary schools, it need hardly be said that there was nothing to compare with our present system. Education, in its popular sense, was not general then as it is now. But the Catholics were nevertheless well abreast of the times in the matter of the education of the poor. So early as the year 1764—before the first Catholic Relief Act—a "Society for the Instruction of the Children of Indigent Parents" was established, which was well supported and still continuing its work at the time we are speaking of. Partly by the help of this Society, and partly by the aid of voluntary subscriptions, two large schools were supported in London. One of these was at St. George's Fields, and was for boys and girls, though they were kept separate. The other was advertised in the *Directory* as "St. Patrick's Charity School, under the patronage of the Right Rev. Dr. Douglass, V.A., instituted for the special purpose of extending the benefits of a moral and religious education to the children of indigent Catholics in St. Giles's and

its vicinity;" this was established in 1803. Two years later the committee of management issued a circular pointing out that it often happened that the most deserving cases were taken out of their hands, when, through the death of the parents, the children were sent to the workhouse, where there was no provision for bringing them up as Catholics. They therefore appealed for funds for establishing an orphanage, united to a "School of Industry," which might in time become self-supporting; and the scheme was carried into effect the same year. There was also a large school at Wapping, under the supervision of the clergy of Virginia Street. And other schools continued to be founded in succeeding years.

In acquainting ourselves with the general Catholic charities of the day, we cannot fail to be amused at the curious titles by which they were known. This remark does not, indeed, apply to the first of them—the Aged Poor Society—which was already a century old; but it does to the other three, which were called respectively the Benevolent Society, the Beneficent Association, and the Laudable Institution. A few words about each will not be without interest.

The Aged Poor Society was founded in 1708, and still exists. Its object and scope were denoted

by its name. Small pensions are given to poor superannuated and infirm Catholics, and there are now almshouses supported out of its funds. It has always been financed solely by voluntary donations and legacies. There used to be an annual sermon at Lincoln's Inn Church, when a collection was made which usually produced a considerable sum of money.

The Benevolent Society has similar aims, and this, too, exists to-day. It began in the year 1761, and took its rise in the heart of the city. The writer in the *Catholic Miscellany* describes its foundation: "[The Benevolent Society] owed its commencement," he says, "to the unassuming exertions of a few tradesmen, who were occasionally in the habit of spending an evening at a public-house near Bunhill Row. Their custom was to recite together the office of the dead, then for each one to subscribe a trifle towards the funds, and to form plans for the management of their rising charitable association, while they forgot the labours of the day in a pint of porter and a pipe. Among these praiseworthy tradesmen, the following seem to have taken the lead: Peter Lyon . . . he was a smith and screw-maker in Tooley Street, and for some time the senior member or father of the Blacksmiths' Company; Joseph Hunt . . . he was a glazier in

Smithfield, and was also father of the Glaziers Company; Mr. McCarthy, a baker in Bunhill Row; and Peter Flarty, whose name is still dear to the society as a most beneficent benefactor." The Benevolent seems to have grown steadily from the time of its foundation, and was as well known and supported a century ago as it is to-day.

The other two charitable societies were among those which were merged about the year 1812 in the "Associated Catholic Charities," of which Mr. Joseph Booker was secretary for over a quarter of a century. The Beneficent Society was first established in 1784, "for putting out apprentices such poor boys as have no relations, or whose relatives are incapable of providing for them." The "Laudable Institution" was founded "for establishing a fund to clothe, maintain, and educate poor Catholic children"; and we read that "it originated in the humble endeavours of several poor men, who assembled in 1797 at the Mariners, a public-house in Fore Street, and subscribed each one penny per week towards the education of the poor. They drew up rules for the government of their society, which they denominated the Laudable." We read further that "one of the first promoters of the Laudable was a Greenwich pensioner, who, hearing that the Government

was in want of men, exclaimed that it was a shame for any one to be eating the bread of idleness when the country required his services: he therefore left the College, came to London, paid his pence twelve months in advance, and embarked; but he was never heard of afterwards; probably he perished in the heat of battle." [1] The bankers for all these charities were the well-known Catholic firm of Messrs. Wright, of Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. The bank failed in 1840.

Besides the ordinary subscriptions and donations, there were these occasional sermons with special collections for the support of particular charities, which were responded to better in proportion than is often the case now. On one particular occasion, we read of the collections in the six principal London Churches amounting to £300, not far off what is now sometimes obtained from the whole diocese. Most of the charitable societies also found a means of increasing their funds by holding an annual dinner, when their work was reported on, and a special collection made. We are still familiar with this method in the case of the Benevolent Society, whose dinner every November continues to be one of the regular institutions of London Catholicity, and a curious link with the past. In connection with this, it is interesting

[1] *Catholic Miscellany*, November, 1823, p. 484.

to compare the ordinary charity dinner a century ago with one to-day, to see how our customs have changed in the course of a hundred years. The following description is taken from several different accounts, and includes features chosen from each. All the descriptions refer to somewhat later than 1805, to the time when Dr. Poynter was Vicar Apostolic; but I do not imagine that there had been very much change in their character during that short time, except, perhaps, that there was a better understanding between the laity and the Vicars Apostolic, for it was during Dr. Poynter's episcopate, as we have seen, that the friction between them was overcome.

The dinner would take place at one of the "Taverns" which alone had rooms large enough; the Freemasons' Tavern, in Great Queen Street, being the favourite. A public dinner would be not earlier than six, and though at his own house Dr. Douglass, like others of that day, dined at four, for a public occasion they would wait till a later hour. The chair was taken by the President of the Charity, with the Vicar Apostolic on his right. About thirty or forty was considered ordinarily a good attendance.

At the end of dinner the cloth was removed, this being the recognized sign that dessert had begun, and it was time for music and speeches.

The first piece was always the "Non nobis Domine," sung by professional musicians, "assisted by some of the company, who kindly lent their services for the occasion." This served as the grace after dinner, and apparently was considered enough to discharge all duties of profession of religion, for the health of the Pope was not thought necessary. The loyal toasts, however, were prolonged into several, as for example: 1. The King. 2. The Duke of York. 3. The Royal Family. "These toasts," we read, "were followed by the grand National Anthem of 'God save the King,' and the admirable glee, 'Hail, Star of Brunswick.'" During the Regency the health of the King was drunk in silence, and followed by that of the Prince Regent. Then came "the Army and Navy," "and at the request of the Chairman, Mr. J. Boyle sang 'The Last Words of Marmion.'" After this followed the health of the Vicar Apostolic; then a speech by the Chairman proposing success to this particular charity; and the usual feature was that some of those maintained by the charity were brought into the room. On one occasion there were eight orphans, "attended by their matrons"; and it is remarked that "their appearance was peculiarly neat and healthy." "A little boy spoke an address on the occasion, with great feeling and

propriety." The speech followed, in presence of these "interesting objects of the charity," and then the collection was made. The amount subscribed averaged between £1 and £2 per head.

Here is a specimen of what was considered an eloquent oration, quite in the style of the day. The speaker was Rev. D. McDonnell, head priest at St. George's Fields, and afterwards Bishop of Olympus and Vicar Apostolic of Trinidad :

"He said the Emperors of Rome were famed, and deservedly famed, for their triumphal arches, their martial deeds, and their heroic acts. The Emperors of Egypt were prized, and highly prized, for their aqueducts and reservoirs, which turned their parched and barren lands into fertile and flowery fields. But the noblest monuments *their* [the present company's] charity would raise 'shall stand unhurt amidst the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.' For the objects of their beneficence were those young immortals who would, if not for the benefits derived from religious instruction, become abettors of vice and pests of society. Nothing should be wanting on his part to promote the present and eternal happiness of all his flock, and by following the great example of his illustrious

and pious predecessor,[1] he should secure his own happiness and their esteem."

Further toasts followed—the Stewards, the Secretary, &c., and finally that of the Chairman. Then the Chairman and Bishops and clergy and any distinguished guests left the room, and as it must have been already well after nine, one would have thought that the meeting would have come to an end. By no means. "A. B., Esq., was unanimously called to the chair, which he filled with great spirit and ability," and they seem to have gone on for another couple of hours proposing each other's healths and singing songs. Then at last "the Chairman" (that is, the second Chairman) "gave 'To our next merry meeting,' which was drank (*sic*) with three times three and great applause. After which the company separated, mutually pleased with each other, as well as with the harmony, conviviality, and spirit with which the meeting was kept up."

Sometimes a charity dinner was on a larger scale, and in that of the Associated Catholic Charities there would be two or three hundred guests. Mr. Charles Butler's presence would always be an attraction. The following description of one such occasion is from the diary of Lady Bedingfield :—

[1] Dr. Bramston.

"1819. Monday [June] 7. My Girls and I dined at 4, and then accompanied all the Cliffords to the Freemasons' tavern, where there was a Dinner for the United Charities. We sat together in the Gallery, Lady Clifford and 4 daughters, Lady Jerningham and Charlotte, Lady Petre and Anna Maria P., Lady Dorothy Eyre, Countess de Tront, Mrs. Maxwell and her Daughter, Sir T. Clifford's Sister and Daughter, Mrs. Hugh Clifford, Mrs. Blount, &c., &c., &c. Lord Clifford was in the Chair, the Duke of Norfolk on one side, Bishop Poynter the other; there were about 300 at dinner. The Children, in number about 700, came in afterw^{ds}, with their different Flags, &c. Mr. Butler made a speech, and one of the little Boys repeated something appropriate, after which a Collection was made, amounting, I believe, to above £500, £39 of which was given by the Ladies in the Gallery. We (the Ladies) had tea afterw^{ds} in an adjoining room. The whole was very Interesting. The only part I disliked was some comic Songs, which did not accord with the feelings that the object and manner of the meeting created. Lord Clifford acquitted himself extremely well." [1]

For a number of years H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex used to preside at the dinner for St.

[1] *Jerningham Letters*, ii. p. 136.

Patrick's Charity Schools, when several hundred guests would assemble, and the subscription would be proportionately increased. On one occasion—in 1816—H.R.H. the Duke of Kent presided, and was supported by H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex, the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Fingall, Lord Clifford, &c., and on that occasion over five hundred pounds were collected in the room. The Duke of Kent in his speech said that the children educated at the school were almost all of Irish Catholic parents, and asked, "Why should they not be brought up in that faith, the religion of their ancestors?" We are told that "these truly liberal sentiments were hailed with an enthusiasm of applause." At the usual parade of children, some 250 in number, one of the boys, Michael Quinn, was presented to the Duke, who hung a good conduct medal with a ribbon around his neck, and "the fortunate youth was permitted to drink the Duke's health, and was then borne in triumph round the table amidst the renewed huzzas of his companions, and the applause of the company."

Before leaving the subject of charities it is perhaps in place also to mention an agency for providing situations for Catholic servants, the office of which was in Duke Street, Grosvenor

Square, next door to Mr. Keating's shop. The following quotation from its prospectus shows that it was regarded in a sense as a charitable society :—

"The distressing situation of many deserving Catholic servants is more easily felt than described, especially of the unprotected part of the sex, who, though anxiously desirous of Catholic places, are yet reluctantly forced to seek for bread in families where, whether from the ill-judged prejudices of masters and mistresses or fellow-servants, their incessant employments, which leave them not a moment's leisure for spiritual recollection, or their distance in the country from any Catholic Chapel, render the performance of the religious duties above alluded to absolutely impossible. These inconveniences, and many others of a still more serious nature that flow from them, are too generally known and acknowledged for even the most captious to deem imaginary; for does it not frequently happen that servants who are thus, through the specious appearance of necessity, induced to trespass and trample on these observances and duties of religion, which are the safeguards of morality, become at length the easy prey of every vice? To apply a remedy to such disorders is the first object of the Proprietors of

this Office, who therefore humbly solicit the continuance of the patronage of the Catholic public."

Finally, a few words should be added on the fund for the support of sick or superannuated priests. It is well known that there are now two such funds in the south of England, which term includes the dioceses of Westminster, Southwark, and Portsmouth, and is thus almost conterminous with the former London District,[1] one of the few remaining links with the days of the Vicars Apostolic. The two funds are different as to age and importance.

The Secular Clergy Common Fund, popularly known as the Great M,[2] was founded in 1701. Its specified object is a characteristic commentary on Catholic history of those times, for it was put down as being to relieve priests who "laboured under grievous necessity from infirmity, old age, or imprisonment for the faith."

[1] The London District before 1840 included Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. These counties were included in the "Eastern District" established in that year, and subsequently, on the re-establishment of the hierarchy, they were joined to the Northampton diocese.

[2] Apparently from the M which was inserted in the *Ordo* on the date of the annual meeting, till a very few years ago. The large fund being known as the "Great M," it was, perhaps, natural that the smaller fund should afterwards be known as the "Little M."

At the commencement every priest subscribed one-third of the "emolument he derived from his functions." It may be noted that the Fund was established by the clergy themselves, but in close union with the Bishops. Dr. Giffard, Vicar Apostolic of the London District, was, in fact, the first administrator ; but evidently it was found that this arrangement did not work very smoothly, for in 1705 he resigned in favour of Rev. Gerald Saltmarsh. Later on there was considerable friction with Dr. Giffard, and still more with his successor, Dr. Petre, and eventually the Bishops ceased to be members.

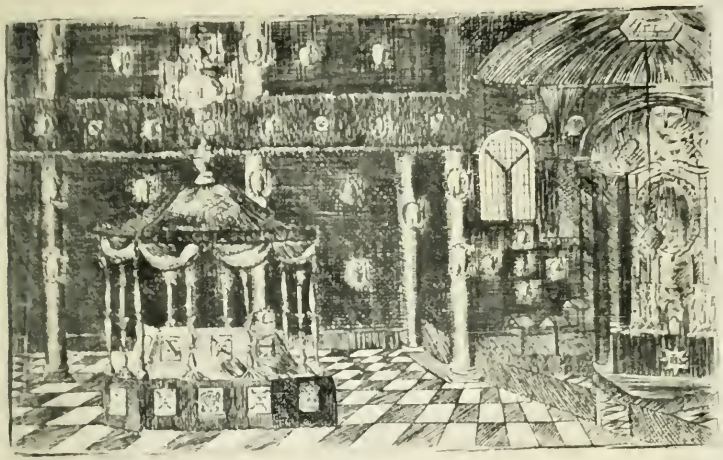
Early in the nineteenth century a feeling began to show itself that the allowance which the Common Fund was able to afford was insufficient. Although a good deal of money had accrued by donations and legacies, the multiplication of clergy went on at greater speed than that at which the fund increased ; and after much discussion, in the year 1803 a second fund was started, under similar conditions, and known as the Secular Clergy New Common Fund. This has always been on a smaller scale than the original fund, and the allowance granted would not suffice for any sick priest's necessary expenses ; but it forms a valuable supplement, for a priest can belong to both.

XII

OBSEQUIES OF LONDON CATHOLICS

THE last phase of London Catholicity of a century ago to consider is the method of dealing with the dead. All funerals at that date took place in Protestant cemeteries, and during the continuance of the Penal Laws the only consolation of religion which the people could look for was to have the Catholic funeral service read over the coffin before it left the house. Those who were in a position to do so would arrange for a Requiem mass at one of the chapels at a convenient date; but it did not form part of the funeral rite, and the body was not present. Thus, for example, when Bishop Talbot died, he was buried in the Hammersmith churchyard; and four Requiems were sung, one in each of the principal Embassy Chapels,[1] and in each case a

[1] These were: (1) The Portuguese, South Street; (2) The Sardinian, Lincoln's Inn Fields; (3) The Spanish, York Street, St. James's Square; and (4)The Neapolitan, Seymour Mews, Portman Square. The Bavarian had at that date ceased to be, strictly speaking, an embassy chapel.



YOU are humbly requested to assist at the SOLEMN DIRGE for the Repose of the SOUL of

The Right Rev. and Honorable

DR. JAMES TALBOT,

Lord Bishop of Birtha, and Vicar Apostolic for this District,

Who departed this Life at Hammersmith, the 26th Day of January, 1790, in the 64th Year of his Age.

At the CHAPELS, and on the DAYS following,

SOUTH-STREET, GROSVENOR-SQUARE, THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY.
DUKE-STREET, LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS, THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY.
YORK-STREET, ST. JAMES'S-SQUARE, FRIDAY, 26 [illegible] MAY.
SEYMOUR-MEWS, PORTMAN-SQUARE, WEDNESDAY [illegible] MARCH.

The Office will begin exactly at Ten o'Clock; the Procession, [illegible] High Mass at Half after Eleven.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.—AMEN.

COGHLAN, Printer, Duke-Street, Grosvenor-Square, 1790.

The Nobility and Gentry, who reside, or are [illegible] in London, are requested to [illegible] with their Addresses [illegible] to the Delivery Boy, [illegible] Favour [illegible] neglect.

NOTICE OF REQUIEM SERVICES FOR BISHOP JAMES TALBOT.

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dirge was sung first. Bishop Talbot, moreover, left a legacy of £1 to each priest of the London District, for masses for his soul. The circular announcing the Requiems is here reproduced, and is an interesting relic of Catholic life of that period. The notice at the foot is in curiously quaint English : "The Nobility and Gentry who remove, or are not constantly resident in London, are requested to honour the Printer with their Address on any such change; any omission in the delivery being totally contrary to his inclination, and he wishes always to be informed of such neglect."

After the passing of the Act of 1791, it became possible to have the body brought to the chapel for the Requiem, but some little time passed away before this was done commonly. The custom of having a catafalque in cases when the body was not there was well known, and some of them were very elaborate, after the French model. The funeral of Father O'Leary in 1802 is the first large one I can find recorded at which there was a Requiem *praesente cadavere;* while the first Vicar Apostolic to be buried with full Catholic rites publicly carried out was Dr. Douglass. As time went on it became customary to bring the body to the church for the funeral service also when there was to be no Requiem.

The arrangement of the coffin, &c., did not differ from that when the deceased was a non-Catholic. The tradition of burying a priest in his vestments had completely died out, as indeed was only to be expected, during the period of the Penal Laws, and did not revive before the middle of the century. Even Bishops were buried with their hands lying at their sides, and without any sign of Christianity inside the coffin. Outside, the inscription was Catholic in character, with the initials R.I.P., and in the case of Bishop Talbot, there was a crucifix on the leaden coffin. The custom of putting mortuary cards on the church door was just coming into vogue; the earliest one I have seen is Bishop Challoner's (1781). The editor of the *Catholic Directory* collected names every year from all the Metropolitan churches for his obituary list, for which each church paid a small fee. The list was headed by a print of a skull and crossbones.

The favourite churchyard for the London Catholics of the upper classes, as well as for the clergy, was old St. Pancras. Several Vicars Apostolic were buried there, and some French Bishops, and many of the clergy both French and English; and many of the most influential of the laity.

The cemetery has, however, changed very much

OLD CHURCH AND CEMETERY OF ST. PANCRAS.

From "Old and New London" (by permission of Messrs. Cassell).

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during the last hundred years. In the first place, a large additional cemetery was established by its side about the year 1805, for the use of the parish of St. Giles, and known as the new Cemetery of St. Giles, the old one adjacent to the parish church being closed. Then both the new cemetery and that of St. Pancras were cut through by the Midland Railway when it was being extended to London nearly forty years ago. By this time both cemeteries had ceased to be used, and the wall between them had been pulled down. At the present day, therefore, the whole gives the appearance of one large cemetery. In a conspicuous place is a large memorial, giving the names of many whose graves have been destroyed; one of these is Mgr. de la Marche, Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, whose remains were taken back to France in 1868.

There is, however, more left of the old St. Pancras cemetery than is commonly supposed, and a fair number of the old Catholic graves still exist. Father O'Leary's was intact until the year 1891, when his remains were moved to St. Mary's, Kensal Green. Recently the Giffard vault has been identified,[1] containing the bodies

[1] The identification was made by means of the register; the inscription being invisible. Nevertheless, on taking a rubbing of the top of the tomb, and holding it to the light, the names were found to be discernible.

of three Vicars Apostolic. One of these was Bishop Bonaventure Giffard, the friend of James II, appointed by him President of Magdalen College, Oxford, but promptly ejected by the Fellows. He afterwards survived several imprisonments for the faith, and after ruling the London District from 1703 to 1734, died in the latter year at the age of ninety-two. His brother, Rev. Andrew Giffard, was elected Vicar Apostolic of the Western District, but refused the appointment, and died soon afterwards through the hardships he endured in escaping from a "priest-catcher" at a time when he was already ill with fever. In the same vault lie the mortal remains of Bishop Douglass,[1] whom we have come across so much in these pages. And many other names can be found on the gravestones to remind one of Catholic London of a century ago, not the least interesting being that of Samuel Webbe, the musician, who died in 1816.

When the new Cemetery of St. Giles was made, the old one was at first closed; but in 1826 it was reopened. The Irish always preferred the old one, for it had been consecrated in Catholic times, and sanctified by long use. When both were open, they were commonly allowed to follow

[1] So the contemporary records assert; but there is no mention of Bishop Douglass in the cemetery register.

their preference. The only exception was the year of cholera, when it was considered undesirable to bury any who died of that disease in the old cemetery. The Anglican Rector, however, had to communicate with Dr. Bramston, the Vicar Apostolic, and it was not till the latter wrote a circular to the Catholics of Soho that they were content to forego their wishes.

Most of the other London cemeteries contained a certain number of Catholic graves, which were often kept together in a Catholic corner. After St. Pancras, St. Sepulchre, St. Clement Danes, and Paddington Green were favourite cemeteries for Catholics.

After the opening of Moorfields in 1820, a regular Catholic burial-place was provided in the vaults underneath the church, and in the adjoining cemetery. In these most of the chief Catholics who died in the succeeding years, both clergy and laity, were buried, so that many of those who were prominent figures in Catholic London of a century ago were laid to rest there; among them may be mentioned Bishops Poynter and Bramston, Rev. James Archer, and Rev. Francis Tuite, who have been spoken of in these pages, and likewise members of most of the chief London Catholic families. When Moorfields was pulled down, in 1899–1900,

the remains were moved out to Wembley, and there re-interred; but the bodies of the three Bishops and one or two of the more important clergy were taken to St. Edmund's College, where they now lie.

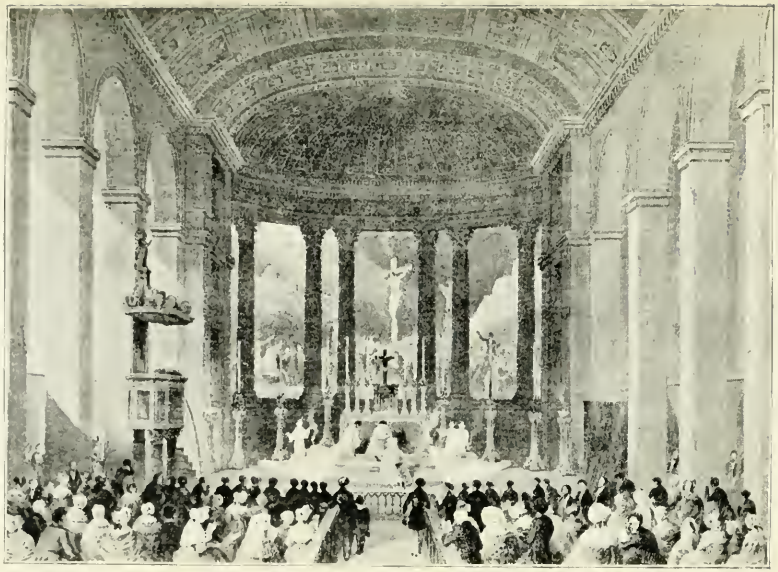
XIII

CONCLUSION

DR. DOUGLASS died in 1812, and was succeeded by his coadjutor, Dr. Poynter, who soon afterwards relinquished the Presidency of St. Edmund's College in order to reside in London. His great ambition was to see at least one worthy Catholic church in the metropolis, and this was realized when Moorfields was built. We may imagine the Catholics of that time watching the walls arise, even as we in our time watched those of the great Cathedral at Westminster, and to them the achievement of that day was no less than Cardinal Vaughan's was to us. They saw a church of proportions such as those of a generation earlier would not have dared to hope for, and of a beauty of design at any rate according to the taste which obtained at that period. The Pope—Pius VII—sent a valuable present of a chalice and paten, with an inscription dictated by himself.

The church took over four years to build; but the greater part of that time was devoted to the interior decorations. The work was begun in the spring of 1817, and by the following winter the roof was on. At that stage we read that "At the recommendation of the architect, a suspension of the works took place, in order that he and the Committee might have sufficient time to devise the most eligible plan for fitting up and decorating the interior of the Chapel, so as to accord more with the approved taste of the age, and the respectability of those for whose accommodation it was chiefly intended." With this end in view, the architect, Mr. John Newman, travelled abroad for some months, to see specimens of ecclesiastical art in other countries; on his return the work was resumed, and continued to the end without further intermission. The cost from first to last was £26,000, which would nowadays represent at least twice that sum.

We can well imagine the feelings of priests and people on that opening day, April 20, 1820. The elderly ones amongst them could remember the old chapel in Ropemakers' Alley, and the anxieties and troubles of the Riots. Those well on in middle life had had personal experience of England under the Penal Laws. It was hardly a generation ago since it was unsafe to



ST. MARY'S, MOORFIELDS.

[*To face page* 192.

use the word mass, and many of the elder ones still preserved the custom of speaking of it as "prayers." And now they were celebrating the holy mysteries in the full light of day, and in a church which any country might have been proud to possess. Dr. Poynter pontificated and himself preached the sermon, and we can enter into his feelings of joy on that day.

But that church, then and long afterwards the pride of English Catholics, has now done its work and is gone. It served for some twenty years as the Pro-Cathedral of the diocese of Westminster after the restoration of the hierarchy; then its congregation gradually left it as the old fashionable residences in Finsbury Circus and elsewhere were turned into business offices; In 1869 Moorfields ceased to be the Pro-Cathedral, and finally, in 1899, the church itself disappeared, the site alone realizing eight times as much money as had been expended on the building of it.

But although the Pro-Cathedral of Moorfields is gone, it has been replaced by a far larger and nobler building, which is the permanent Cathedral of the Diocese. In the meantime Catholicism in London has shown an unlooked-for power of expansion. The eleven churches of a hundred years ago have become one hun-

dred and fifty to-day; the priests from thirty-five have grown to over five hundred; and we have more than one hundred religious congregations of men and women.

We may well pause to thank Providence for the remarkable development of Catholicity in London during a century of time; and we may ask ourselves the question, if so much has been done in the past hundred years, what we may hope for in the century not now begun? The answer to this we leave in the spirit of faith and hope in the hands of Providence.

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